IF/THEN

Chance and Creativity

THE MUNDANE ISSUE

What if the ordinary is already important?

AUGUST 2026 VOLUME ONE

IF/THEN

03 WELCOME
04 PURPOSE
05 USING CHANCE: PROMPTS
06 LEXICON
07 PEOPLE IN HISTORY
09 ARTISTS PART 1
57 ARTICLE 1: SANCTIFY THE MUNDANE
60 ARTISTS PART 2
112 ARTICLE 2: FAB: CHANCE ENCOUNTERS
120 SAN & CUATRO
121 SHARED THEMES

WELCOME

Thank you for taking the time to read this first issue of If/Then: Chance and Creativity. I hope you find the work inside as interesting, generous, and quietly strange as I have found it while collecting it.

This first volume is built around the theme of the mundane. On the surface, that might sound like a small or even unexciting place to begin. The mundane is easy to overlook because it is always there: the repeated object, the passing detail, the ordinary routine, the background texture of a day. Yet this is also why it matters. Most of life is not made from dramatic turning points, but from small accumulations of attention, habit, accident, labour, waiting, noticing, and repetition.

We cannot control every aspect of our lives. Much of what shapes us arrives through timing, environment, other people, material limitations, chance encounters, and the ordinary conditions we move through without always recognising them. In that sense, the mundane is not the opposite of meaning. It is often the field in which meaning slowly becomes visible.

A central interest of this magazine is the idea that creativity does not always begin with total freedom or grand inspiration. Sometimes it begins with a restriction, a prompt, a mistake, a found object, a repeated walk, a domestic scene, or something that first appears too small to matter. These things can redirect attention. They can make us look again. They can turn what seemed like background noise into something charged, relational, and alive.

The interesting parts of life often exist in the minutiae: in the half-noticed, the over-familiar, the boring, the awkward, the accidental, and the things we only understand later. This issue gathers artists and writers who, in different ways, sit with those details. Their work suggests that the ordinary is not empty. It is dense. It is full of possible connections waiting to be noticed.

So, welcome to Mundane. I hope this issue gives you something to look at again, something to think with, or something small that follows you after reading.

Brandon

BRANDON J. BARNARD - EDITOR

COVER PHOTO:
SCREEN-GRAB FROM 'PILLS' (2025)
BY BRANDON J. BARNARD

PURPOSE

I've participated in enough galleries and publications to know which ones are vanity projects. There are more of those than ‘real’ ones. I'm not immune to having my ego stroked either. But I want this to be more than that.

When I put out the call for this issue on mundaneness, hundreds of people submitted work. I selected 24 artists whose work appears here, alongside questions I asked each of them. The questions aren't arbitrary - they're trying to get at something specific: how does chance affect the way we make things? And in this issue particularly, what does the mundane world do to our creative processes?

My hope is that this publication can function as a resource - something people can use to try and understand the world more, while looking at cool and interesting art. At the end, this issue closes with a section where I look at what patterns emerge across everyone's responses. What threads connect these different practices?

That's what I'm interested in. Not just showing work, but seeing what it reveals when you put it all together.

Brandon J. Barnard
Editor

USING CHANCE: PROMPTS

Since we're on the topic of the Mundane - and since this is the first issue of the magazine - it feels right to start with one of the simplest, most versatile, and frankly underrated chance devices we have: prompts.

Prompts might feel basic, almost childish. But historically, they've been a backbone of creative disruption Surrealists used automatic writing, drawing and chance-based games; Fluxus artists treated instructions as art objects; Dadaists embraced the arbitrary because it broke habits and created new starting points. Even writing workshops today still lean on prompts without realising they're participating in a century-l lineage of chance aesthetics. They endure because they work.

Think of a prompt as a small external nudge - something that whispers in your process, "What if you tried this instead?" That nudge can come from anywhere: a word in a book, a cut-out picture, the fourth image in your camera roll, a number on a dice roll, a sound bite, a Tarot card, a random Wikipedia article. The mechanism doesn't matter as much as the commitment.

And that leads to the only real rule: if you're choosing to do this, commit. The moment you say "nah, I don't like this one" the spell breaks. You're back in full control, and therefore back in your comfort zone - exactly where chance has no oxygen. Start with the mindset: If I am choosing to do this, I will do it properly. I will respect the prompt even if it is annoying, boring, or makes no sense.

And crucially: interpret the prompt however you want.
If you draw the word "bee" from a hat, this doesn't mean you must draw/paint/film/write about a bee. Your interpretation is the practice. You might decide that your colour palette will be black and yellow. Or you might research the history of beekeeping. Or think about the economic ramifications of bee die-off. Or imagine the psychology of living in a hive. Or decide the prompt is really about the letter B and spiral off into something completely unrelated. Prompts aren't instructions - they're ignition points.

To keep things from spiralling into a three-month odyssey (unless you want that), set an endpoint. This is essential. One painting. One photograph. One page. One 30-minute burst. One sound clip. Whatever fits your practice. The endpoint gives the chaos somewhere to land. It also allows you time to process.

Why bother with any of this? Because prompts force you sideways. They knock you off the well-worn neural paths you take automatically. They push you into new colours, new textures, new connections. You learn things you didn't intend to learn. You notice things you've been filtering out. The mundane becomes strange again.

Chance isn't about randomness for its own sake. It's about creating conditions where discovery is possible. Prompts are one of the easiest ways to do that - they're small, cheap, portable, and infinitely remixable. They let you outsource the first step, which is usually the hardest, and let the rest unfold however it wants to.

Treat prompts as collaborators. Annoying ones. Generous ones. Ones that reveal parts of your practice you didn't know were there.

Roll the dice. Pull the card. Open the book. Commit.

And let the work reveal itself.

LEXICON

Chance:

An event, condition or influence that sits outside a person's complete control. Chance is not necessarily pure randomness.

Mundane:

The ordinary, repeated and overfamiliar parts of life. Mundane does not mean meaningless.

Agency:

The ability to make choices, take action or influence an outcome. Agency can belong to people, but influence may also come from materials, systems and environments.

Agency Restriction:

Barnard's working definition of chance: a prompt, condition, object, person or system that limits or redirects the choices available to somebody.

Serendipity:

A meaningful discovery that emerges from an unexpected event or connection. An accident alone is not serendipity; something useful must be recognised within it.

Structured Serendipity:

The deliberate creation of conditions in which unexpected discoveries are more likely to occur. It creates an opportunity rather than guaranteeing a result.

Attention:

The act of noticing, selecting and holding something in view. Attention can reveal value, but it can also determine what remains unseen.

Distributed Authorship:

The idea that a work can be shaped by the artist alongside materials, other people, environments, machines or systems.

Material Agency:

The capacity of a material's properties - such as weight, resistance, fragility or movement - to redirect the making process.

Recontextualisation:

Moving an object, image or action into a new setting so that it is understood differently.

Ephemera:

Objects or materials made for temporary use and not expected to survive, such as wrappers, notices, scraps and printed advertisements.

Trace:

A mark, residue or absence that provides evidence of something that previously happened or existed.

Accidental Archive:

An object or collection that preserves information without originally being created as a historical record.

Impermanence:

The condition of changing, deteriorating or eventually disappearing.

Glitch:

An error or disruption within a system that may reveal its limitations or create an unexpected result.

Pareidolia:

Recognising a familiar image - such as a face or figure - within an accidental or ambiguous pattern.

Assemblage:

A work created by combining objects or materials, often in three dimensions.

PEOPLE IN HISTORY: KURT SCHWITTERS

Kurt Schwitters was a German artist born in 1887 who became best known for turning the discarded materials of everyday life into collages, sculptures and eventually entire environments.

After the First World War, Schwitters began collecting scraps from the streets of Hanover: newspaper clippings, tickets, commercial labels, wrappers, fabric, wood and whatever else happened to appear. These were not valuable art materials. They were the bits people had used, dropped and stopped caring about.

He called his approach “Merz”. The name itself came from a fragment of the German word Kommerz, meaning commerce, which appeared on a piece of paper used in one of his early collages. I love that the name for his entire practice came from one incomplete word he happened to find. It feels very appropriate.

Chance entered through what the world supplied. Schwitters could go looking for material, but he could not completely determine which ticket, label or broken object would appear on a particular day. However, he did not simply throw everything into a pile and call the result art. Once collected, the scraps were carefully arranged, layered, glued and sometimes nailed into place.

This balance is what makes him particularly useful for If/Then. Chance provided the material and disrupted the starting point, but Schwitters still had to recognise connections and decide what to do with them. The street supplied the vocabulary; he still had to construct the sentence.

His work also changed the status of ordinary objects. A wrapper stopped being rubbish once it was selected and placed inside a composition, but it did not lose the history of being a wrapper. The stains, damage, printed words and signs of previous use remained visible. The materials became accidental records of the commercial and social world through which they had travelled.

Schwitters eventually extended this approach into the Merzbau, an evolving, walk-in construction built through his home in Hanover. The separation between artwork, archive and domestic space began to collapse. Rather than producing one finished object, he created something that could continue accumulating materials, memories and connections.

What I find most interesting is that Schwitters did not need to discover a spectacular subject. He worked with what was already around him and usually beneath consideration. Chance did not make the work independently, and the rubbish was not secretly meaningful on its own. Meaning emerged because he noticed, collected and reorganised what other people had left behind.
His practice demonstrates that the mundane does not need to be escaped before something creative can happen. Sometimes it only needs to be interrupted, moved into a different relationship and looked at for longer.

‘MERZ 50 COMPOSITION’ (1922)

SELECTED ARTISTS - PART 1

10 ALEXANDRA SAVVO
16 ALIAKSANDRA MARKAVA
20 ALISON JAGGER
24 ALIX EDWARDS
28 ANDY BRATTON
32 AURELIE CRISETIG
36 ALICE BLANCO
38 BARBARA JONES
42 CAMERON LINGS
45 CRISIA CONSTANTINE
50 CYLENA SIMONDS
54 EMILY PRICE

‘**MONK IN PRAYER**’
MEDIUM: NAPKIN

ALEXANDRA SAVVO

@ALEXANDRA.SAVVOPOULOU.9

'LANDSCAPES AT DUSK'

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

I photograph the shapes I encounter in the street and on building walls — forms that remind me of works of art — as well as everyday functional objects that, to me, resemble sculptures. I write poetry and create performances in public space, incorporating images and fragments of dialogue drawn from my daily routine. My practice is rooted in observing the ordinary and reframing it, allowing unnoticed details of everyday life to shift context and acquire new meaning.

'LADY WITH A BAG'
MEDIUM: TOILET PAPER

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance enters my work first through attention. I do not stage what I photograph; I encounter it. The shapes on walls, stains on pavements, accidental arrangements of objects in the street — these are unplanned compositions that already exist before I arrive. My role is to notice them. Walking becomes a method of surrendering control, allowing coincidence to guide what I see and frame. In my performances in public space — acts without direction or choreography — both the development and the outcome depend largely on chance. I cannot predict the behaviour of those present, nor even my own responses. It happens now, in real time, and everything is possible. The work unfolds through spontaneous reactions, interruptions, misunderstandings, weather conditions, and fleeting encounters. Each performance is shaped by what occurs in that specific moment and cannot be replicated. Even in my writing, chance appears through collecting phrases from my daily routine — notes, passing thoughts, fragments of dialogue — which I later rearrange intuitively. In general, I do not make art to be predictable or didactic. I make art to foreground possibility and to include chance as an active presence — almost as if it carries its own form of consciousness.

'EMBRYOS'

You describe walking and noticing as a form of surrender to coincidence. Do you consider attention itself a creative act, or a receptive one? Where does authorship begin - in the object, in the noticing, or in the framing?

Attention, as a byproduct of self-concentration, is primarily a mental process. In this state of equilibrium and clarity, the Mind begins to receive stimuli from the internal world (as in meditation) or the external world (as in the act of walking). It then decides - either instantaneously or later in the "laboratory" - whether to translate these signals into verbal or symbolic language (e.g., imagery, logical relations). My movement is never oblivious; I almost never engage in mechanical routines. Nothing is done simply for the sake of doing. By keeping my "antennae" permanently activated to receive signals, I also experience lucid dreaming. Consequently, in my practice, receptivity is a vital component of creativity, stemming from what I consider a democratic ethos. The creator is not the sole source of meaning but rather a function that continuously gives shape - though not necessarily meaning to chaos. The authorship of a work begins the moment the gaze intersects with space. Framing is an act of power: I choose to elevate something from the margins of the "irrelevant" introducing it into the field of the visible. I then impose it upon the audience, either explicitly through a title or implicitly, depending on my psychological state. For me, walking is both a meditative exercise and a wandering through the "cracks" of the system - those spaces where coincidence escapes the discipline of normality.

Many of your works rely on pareidolia - recognising figures in accidental forms. At what point does a random shape become "a work"? Is there a decisive moment of recognition, or does meaning accumulate gradually?

A random shape becomes an artwork the moment it stimulates my aesthetic sensibility. Pareidolia is not accidental; we recognize forms that our culture has already conditioned us to see —familiar shapes that frame our routine. The "decisive moment" is a rupture in the homogeneity of randomness. Meaning does not accumulate gradually; it is imposed as a sudden revelation.

The object and its energetic charge emerge from oblivion as something that was "always there," awaiting the creator's gaze to engage in dialogue and the artistic process to be transmitted as a message. The public then either embraces or rejects it.

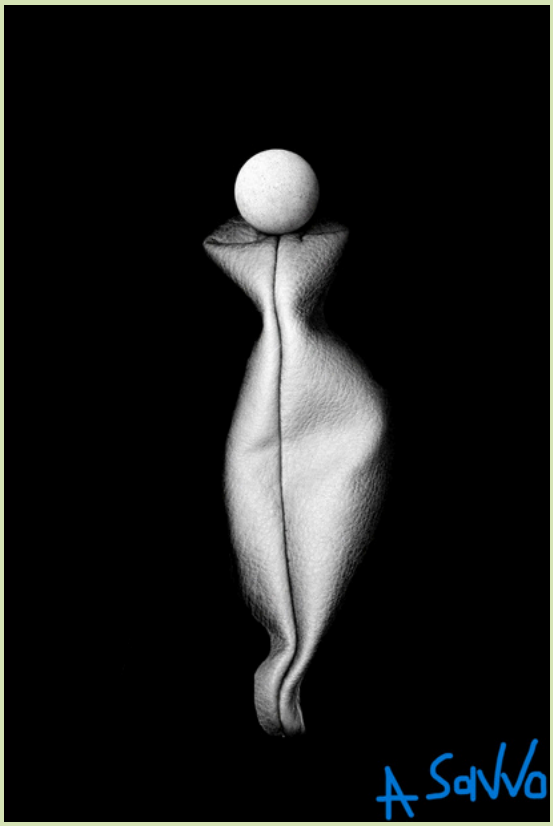
'UNE ÉPREUVE DE PASSAGE'
MEDIUM: PERFORMANCE

You emphasise that you do not stage what you photograph. Is there ever a temptation to adjust or "improve" the found composition? If so, what prevents or permits intervention?

The refusal to intervene is a form of resistance against the subject's desire to dominate the object. If I correct a composition, I impose an arbitrary order, transforming the object into a "disciplined body." Abstaining from staging (mise-en-scène) is an exercise in abandoning the ego and, by extension, an exercise in freedom. I allow the object to exist, or a situation to unfold within its own heterotopia, without subjugating it to the rules of aesthetic correctness. Intervention is prohibited by a respect for randomness, viewed here as a form of "anti-authority." In photography, the temptation to correct usually involves "cleaning" the frame. However, the field where I am truly tested is performance. It is there that the temptation—specifically the degree of staging—lurks most dangerously, as it shifts the very core of the medium. I find it formidable to capture randomness in the performing and audiovisual arts with aesthetic measure and without the crutch of staging.

Works like Lady with a Bag and Monk in Prayer gain clarity through naming. How much of the transformation from mundane object to artwork happens through language? Does the title complete the chance event?

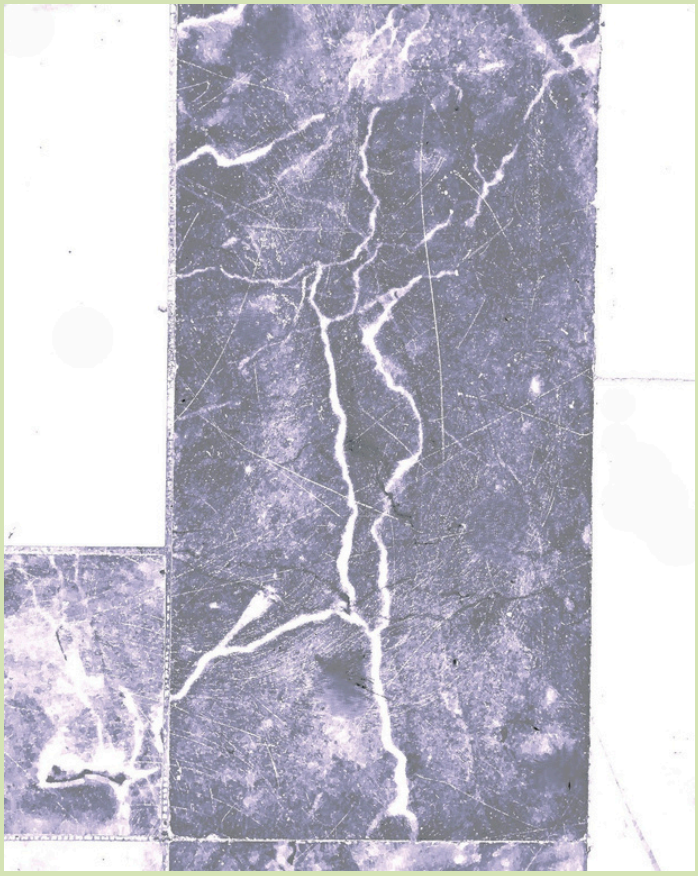
Naming does not function descriptively but performatively. Language is the tool that transforms the mundane into an artwork by integrating it into an archive. A title "completes" the chance event by making it communicable and historical. Without a name, the object remains mute and invisible to the masses; through naming, it acquires a position within the economy of meaning. However, without its characteristic material form, a title is never enough—especially in works of high abstraction. The energy of the work must touch the "consumer" (the audience), even if that audience is a single person. On a psychoanalytic level, I suspect this need for naming relates to a trauma from a toxic professional environment where my work and credentials were systematically devalued. I was referred to as "the one who brings the papers." I was nameless. Thus, for now, I feel the need to give my works titles. Beyond that, I find the process inherently playful.



'NUDE'
MEDIUM: PEBBLE & COSMETIC POUCH

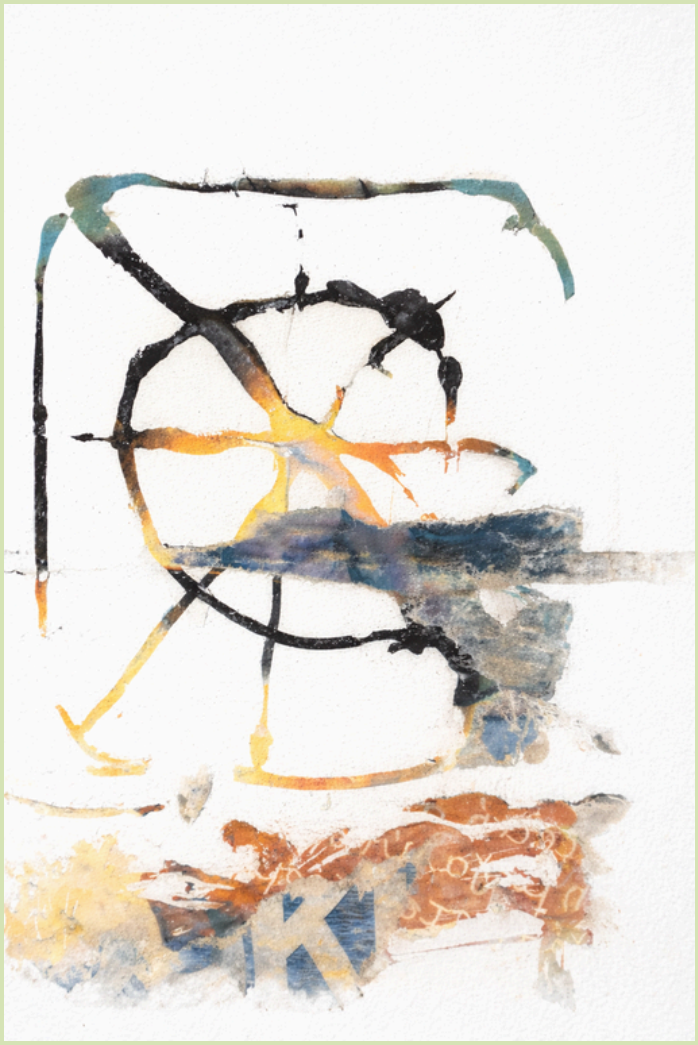
Many materials you use - tissues, napkins, discarded objects - are fragile and temporary. Is ephemerality essential to your relationship with chance, or could your practice operate in more permanent materials?

The use of humble, lightweight materials (tissues, rags, bark, dried leaves, roots) is a statement on the disposable nature of existence and a resistance to the institutional fossilization of museums. Permanent materials seek immortality —a form of metaphysical power. In contrast, ephemeral materials reflect the fragility of human constructs and the discourses surrounding them. Simultaneously, I work with "eternal" materials, such as stone. My practice is not limited to the ephemeral but develops through a constant tension between the disposable and the irrevocable. On one hand, ephemeral materials represent the micro-physics of the event—a reminder that meaning can emerge from nothingness and return to it. On the other hand, my work with stones—whether washed up by the sea or forming the geological foundation of my home on the rock—introduces the element of the Archive. Stone is the "disciplined body" of time. By working with the rock that hosts me, I transform a static geological foundation into a mobile discourse. My choice of stone is not a quest for classical beauty but an archaeology of endurance. While a tissue records the fragility of the moment, stone records "heterochrony": it brings millions of years into the present of my observation. My practice functions as a dialogue between these two extremes. The ephemeral reveals the randomness of existence, while the eternal material (stone) traps it in a state of permanence, turning a chance form into a monument of "nothing" that became "something" through the gaze. The "eternity" of stone is the ultimate framing for chance: it is the moment randomness refuses to die.



‘WOMAN IN BLACK & WHITE’

‘LOVE’



‘THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE’

A Litany of Composure Failing / Excerpts from a diary (performance poetry)

By: Alexandra Savvo

What ha— What ha— What happENeD to you, my dear lady? I don't have a home You You lost it Me Her She did it The one who brings the papers You'll see what's coming to you Ah. Rosemary, tea tree, lavENDer for the acne What happened to you, my dEAR lady? What do you want? A Master's degree A PhD Summery recipes I shall make you a Professor To become a professor, I had to act as a maid for my own professor In fa – la – la – la- la – la mood What happened to you, my dear lady?Spora project Is it a job you want? I am so very sorry You are overqualified for what we need 8. Lapis Lazuli for the nerves The gillyflowers and violas have withered What happened to you, my dear lady? Leave it to me When I was younger, I learned French I will hire you I'll make you my secretary Your heads in here are fffff-illed with shit Trekking Your assignments are worth nothing Open Masters of Ceremonies By hand I see absolutely nothing 4. Turquoise for the Thyroid How values speak to one another Issuance of certification The Mora comes at night They have nothing to offer me You'll be dusting them in the library like kNick-knacks Have you gone mad? I, A, O, U Nothing No – thing I was just joking Royalty Much sooner Keep an eye Elements Regrets It's all in your head I don't record charges or pending matters Right, I'm sending you upstairs to brawl with the crazy lady all day while I watch and laugh Jelly, bananananananananananananas, yogurts, sanitary pADS, shampoo00000000000 82 asterisk, I'm pulling it This will be your job all day long Me – meh – ma – mo – moo prrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr Wiserwork And I will be laughing Letter of guarantee for participation What's in your drawer? Oh, we just love mice in here They are our pets What happened to you, my dear lady? 6699, 6644, 6688 blessings Well, if you get sick, I'll send you for tests Pick up the phone Yes, can you hear me? Tell me something sir, when your mother died, was she still alive? What happened to you, my dear lady? Eye floaters on the rocks

‘WEATHER DEPENDENCE’
MEDIUM: INK, HARD PASTELS, COTTON PAPER

ALIAKSANDRA MARKAVA

'ICY WINDOW'
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

I really love the genre of everyday still lifes. I think beauty is in the small things. The necessary simple daily work brings a kind of harmony and peace to today's chaotic world.

'3 GOLDEN LIGHTS'
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance is a beautifully frozen windowpane at -25 degrees Celsius, or in the rays of the setting sun on a washed curtain, or in everyday details, or even in familiar sensations and reactions. Beauty is both accidental and non-accidental.

You describe everyday still life as harmonious and calming within chaos. How does repetition (annual firewood, seasonal pumpkins, daily laundry) interact with chance in your work? Is repetition a form of stability against chance, or does it reveal subtle variations within it?

If you mean everyday rituals of a person, then, of course, they help to calm down, organize not only their everyday life, but also their thoughts. For such small things, the whole story of another person's day, the story of their habits, and the formation of their character are revealed. Of course, it is easier to create such plots if you observe them or create them regularly. However, I am not afraid of happenstance. On the contrary, I love them very much. A ray of sunlight that suddenly creates a bright accent, an object that falls at the wrong time, cracks in old furniture, unexpected deep or bright shades in the garden or on the street after rain - all these can create a special mood and uniqueness to the moment, the elusive beauty. These moments reveal the philosophy "from simple to complex" and make you admire the fragility and appreciate the time.

'HARVESTING PUMPKINS'
MEDIUM: SOFT PASTELS, COTTON PAPER

You mention frost on windows and sunlight on curtains as moments of chance. Do you see weather as a collaborator in your practice - something that creates compositions for you - or as a condition you respond to emotionally?

Sometimes I even consider the weather and natural phenomena more like an author, while myself being only an intermediary who transfers a fragment of what I see onto paper, canvas, or into the camera's lens. And sometimes the weather can simply contribute to the mood and the choice of colors, style, and materials, even for a previously conceived plot.

You write that beauty is "both accidental and non-accidental." How do you distinguish between something that simply happens and something that feels destined to be noticed?

For example, there is the word "petrichor," which means a special smell in nature after rain. My favorite peony's scent in the garden is familiar, ordinary, and understandable to me. But immediately after a summer thunderstorm, this scent mixes with petrichor, and this peony aroma is already so special and valuable to me, because petrichor does not last long and the combined scent lasts for a short time, a special time for me. Also, if you wash clothes in a basin with soap, the contrast between the color of the basin and the color of soap can be beautiful, but that is all. However, the reflections on the glossy wet surface of soap from the walls of the basin are more interesting, especially if they have a pearly effect. A tram runs down the street every day all year round, but before Christmas it is decorated with garlands of colorful lights and fresh snow falls outside... And then, this tram is not an ordinary tram at all. It's a bit fantastic and very atmospheric. Beautiful tram. That is, I pay attention to the relationship between colors, shapes, textures, time, space, and, of course, context.

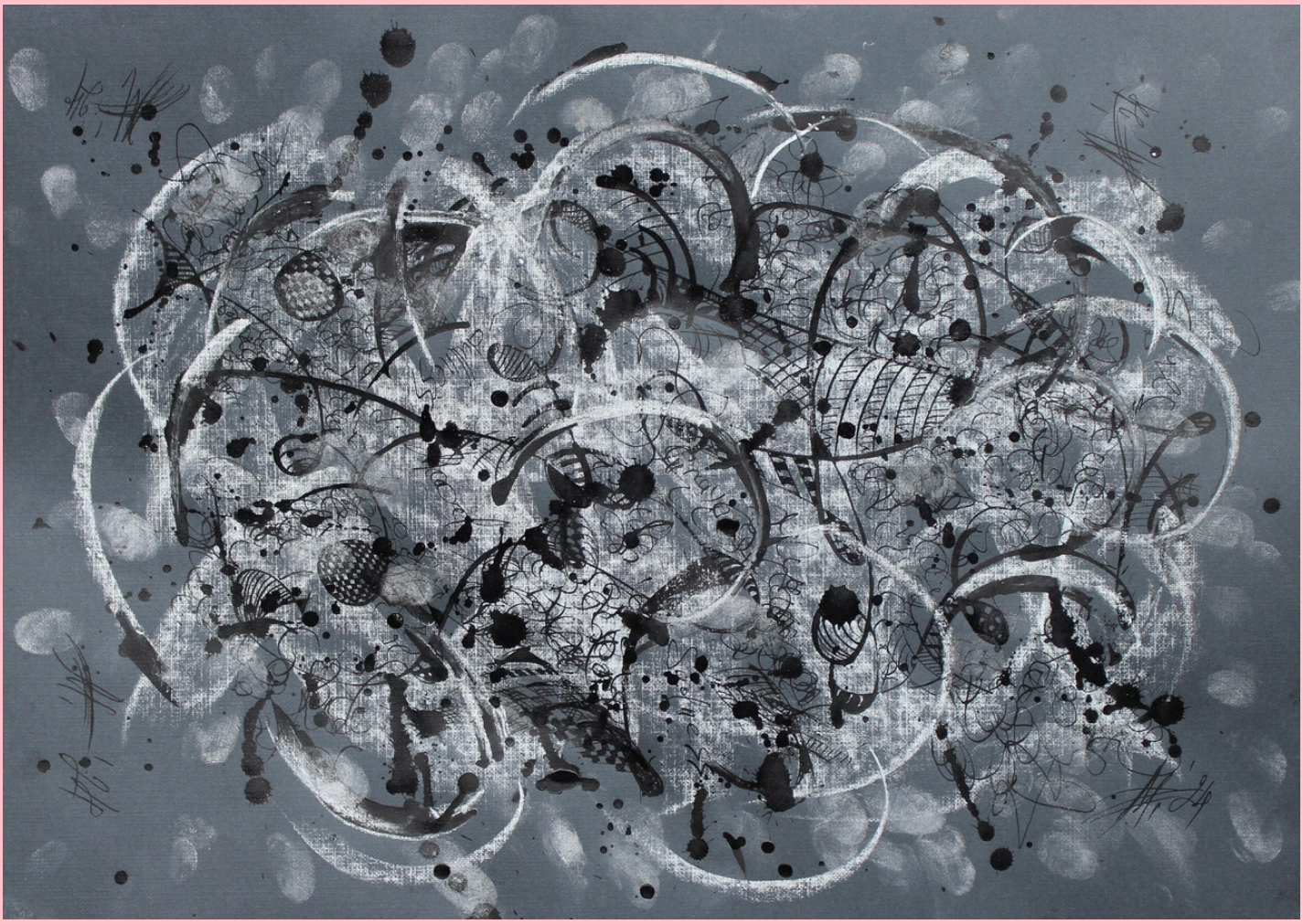
In Weather Dependence, you link forecast and headache. Do you consider bodily reactions (like mood or pain) to be forms of chance within your creative process? How much does your physical state shape what you choose to paint?

The mood is chance. Migraine pain is not chance - it is a natural reaction to weather changes for weather-sensitive people. For example, I sometimes get a migraine before a really bad thunderstorm. However, the weather itself is more chance. I can definitely say that my mood always influences what exactly and how I draw, including the plot, character, stroke style, background color, and so on. But I have only drawn physical conditions such as pain a couple of times - completely by chance, that is.

'FIREWOOD'
MEDIUM: OIL PASTELS, PASTEL PAPER

You describe chance as “a beautifully frozen windowpane at -25°C.” What draws you to freezing fleeting phenomena into static images? Is painting a way of resisting impermanence?

A frozen moment is a rare piece of luck - then you have the opportunity to admire it for longer, in order to better remember its beauty. Snow, ice, sand dunes, traces or drops from rain, tree resin. For example, a fossilized insect in amber in a petrified tree's resin long ago - it's like forever. Painting seems to me not so much about human resistance to impermanence as about resistance to oblivion.



‘**BIG CITY LIFE**’
MEDIUM: INK, HARD PASTELS, COTTON PAPER

‘GLITTERBALL’
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

ALISON JAGGER

@ALISONJAGGER_PHOTOGRAPHY

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

As a passionate street photographer and solo traveller, I consider myself a free spirit, drawn to observing quietly and attentively. My lens is guided by curiosity, capturing moments of character, solitude, and everyday life that often pass unnoticed. Many of these moments could easily be dismissed as mundane — routine scenes and ordinary events that seem to require no acknowledgement. I disagree. My photographs seek to reveal what is often missing from our attention in daily life. There is no spectacle or overt drama, but within these quiet moments there may be a hidden smile, an untold story, or a subtle sense of humour or reflection. What is labelled as mundane can hold intrigue, meaning, and humanity — and it is this overlooked richness that my work aims to uncover.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

As a street photographer, chance is present all around me, all day, every day. Nothing is staged or predetermined; instead, my work relies on responding to what unfolds in front of me. I work with what is available in that moment — the light, the mood, the subject — and make decisions instinctively as situations briefly align. Chance becomes something I must recognise and utilise, rather than control. Central to this process is respect for the people and environments I photograph, and an awareness of the atmosphere I create while working. Each image is the result of a fleeting opportunity, shaped by attentiveness, timing, and a positive engagement with the moment.

You describe making decisions instinctively as situations briefly align. How do you distinguish between instinct and intention in the moment of capture? Is instinct a trained form of control, or a surrender to chance?

When I say I work instinctively, I mean that I don't overthink in the moment. I respond to something that feels visually or emotionally right before I've fully analysed why. The decision happens quickly — it's more of a pull than a plan. That said, instinct isn't random. It's shaped by experience.

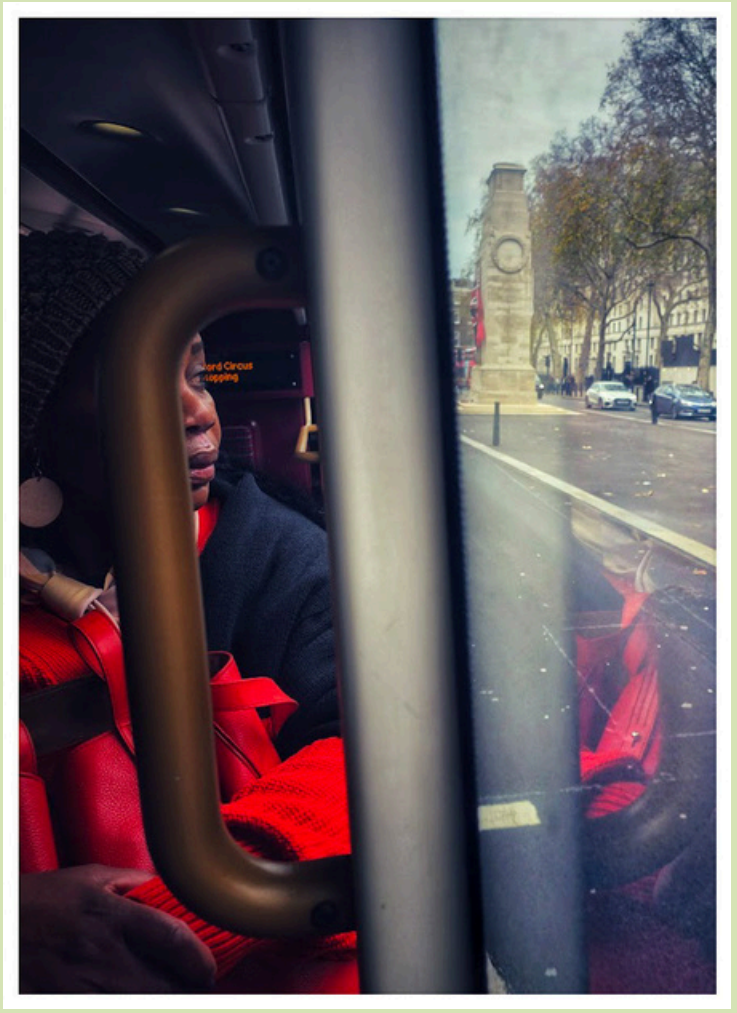
The more I photograph, the more I recognise certain light, colours, gestures or spaces that resonate with me. So in that sense, instinct is informed — but it doesn't feel controlled. It feels immediate. I don't see it as surrendering to chance, but I also don't feel like I'm imposing strict intention. It's somewhere in between. The world presents something ordinary, and for a brief second it feels meaningful. My role is simply to notice and respond before it passes.

'KINGS CROSS'
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

You write that images occur when light, mood, and subject align. Do you actively anticipate these alignments, or do they surprise you? How much of your process is waiting versus reacting?

It's a mixture of both. I don't usually go out with a fixed image in mind, but I am attentive. I'm aware of light, atmosphere and small details, especially in ordinary places. So there's a kind of quiet anticipation — not of a specific moment, but of the possibility that something might shift. Often the alignment of light, mood and subject does surprise me. It happens quickly and without warning, and that's part of what I love about photographing everyday scenes. You can't fully predict it. There is waiting involved, but it's not passive. It's more about being present — watching how the light changes, how a space feels, how someone moves through it. Then when something clicks into place, the reaction is immediate.

'MANNYS 2'
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY



'MUNDANE ENTRY'
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

You mention being aware of the atmosphere you create while working. In what ways does your own presence subtly influence the "chance" moments you capture? Can chance ever be entirely independent of the observer?

I don't think chance is ever completely separate from the observer. The simple act of being somewhere, looking, already shapes what might happen. Even if I'm not directing anything, I've chosen the location, the angle, the moment I press the shutter. That choice influences the outcome. My presence is usually quiet. I don't interfere or stage, but I am part of the environment. People might adjust slightly without realising, or I might position myself in a way that frames the scene differently. So what feels like chance is always gently filtered through my perspective. For me, that doesn't take away from the authenticity of the moment. It just acknowledges that photography is a collaboration between the world as it unfolds and the person noticing it.

Street photography often involves a split-second decision. Have you ever missed what you felt was a significant "chance" moment? How do missed opportunities shape your understanding of chance?

Yes, I've definitely missed moments that felt significant. Sometimes I hesitate, sometimes the light shifts too quickly, or the gesture disappears before I'm ready. Street photography moves fast, and not everything can be captured. Over time, I've realised that missing moments is part of the process. It sharpens my awareness and makes me more attentive next time. It also reminds me that not everything is meant to be held onto. Some moments exist only briefly, and perhaps that's what gives them their weight. In a way, missed opportunities deepen my understanding of chance. They reinforce how fragile and fleeting alignment really is — and how much of photography depends on timing that can't be fully controlled. I am also a very persistent person who relishes a challenge.

Although nothing is staged, framing inevitably edits reality. How do you view cropping and composition in relation to chance? Is framing a way of stabilising chaos or directing meaning?

Even when nothing is staged, framing is a choice. The moment may be unplanned, but the way I compose it is deliberate. I decide what to include, what to exclude, and where to stand. That inevitably shapes the meaning. I don't see framing as controlling chaos so much as giving it clarity. Everyday scenes can feel visually busy or overlooked, and composition helps isolate what first drew me to the moment — a line of light, a gesture, a colour, a sense of stillness. Cropping and composition don't remove chance; they refine it. The unexpected still happens, but framing allows me to hold it in a way that feels balanced and intentional. It's less about directing meaning and more about guiding attention.

'SMILEY BOY'
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

‘PAZ’ (DETAIL)
MEDIUM: FOUND OBJECTS, ACRYLICS, WATERCOLOUR

ALIX EDWARDS

@ARTOGRAPHY_ALIXEDWARDS

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

The 'mundane' is an integral part of my practice, both in terms of subject matter and process. As a broke single mother of 3 children, I had to rush off from art college early, ditch discussions about the finer points of Heideggerian nothing, to collect my children from after-school club, then dash to the supermarket to get the food for dinner. Unlike my much younger counterparts, who could debate philosophical questions, I was at the bottom end of Maslow's triangle, making school packed lunch, taking my daughter to the orthodontist and the other to hospital for a long-term knee injury and this fed into my work and choice of materials. My first project, '29' was initially painted on tombstone-like cut baking paper (29 children murdered during court-enforced contact sessions) and I like to incorporate household and found objects in my practice, for example the fruit and veg string bags in 'Paz' (please see image). It's also connected to my subject matter as my work tells the stories of women who society has dismissed or ignored, including survivors of domestic abuse, my mother's life as a 1940's War Bride and women who gave birth in Magdalene Laundries in Wales.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Sometimes I find myself drawn to objects which I collect, like the curved frame and mesh bags in the shrine 'Paz' (see pics). I do not know why. Then months, sometimes years later, an artwork is 'born'. The blue outer frame in 'Paz' was dumped in our street during lockdown. It stayed there a few days. Got rained on. My mother had died and the contents of her house had been moved to mine 3 days before lockdown so I did not want or need more clutter I could not get rid of. But no-one had taken or vandalised it. 2 weeks later I took it into my home. "Why the hell do you want to take that?" my daughter asked as we loaded the moving truck. I was adamant. It came with us, stayed in the shed for over 3 years, then suddenly I realised what I wanted to do with it. A few days later I was walking down my old street and I found a thin white frame stood against a tree. I had no idea what I would do with it as it would not be suitable for a painting, then I realised that it should frame the focal point of my shrine and separate it into an altar-like triptych. My work is intuitive. Acting on chance discoveries or following an idea, no matter how insane it seems at the time always works. If I stop to think – then the work is always a disaster or becomes 'stuck'.

'PAZ' (DETAIL OF FOUND OBJECTS AND 'SACRED HEARTS')
MEDIUM: FOUND OBJECTS, ACRYLICS, WATERCOLOUR

‘PAZ’
MEDIUM: FOUND OBJECTS, ACRYLICS, WATERCOLOUR

Ode to a salt lamp

By: Alix Edwards

warm embers radiate from your core
your reassuring blood orange glow
roasts the dullest day
mellows the harshest light
you melt black dreams
into an amber halo
you cloak me in comfort
soften the dark edge of night
I trace your rough edges
you are heavy solid to hold
I lick my finger my tongue tingles
you taste of waves and crisps
your colour turns opaque peach
an unhatched dragon egg in my hand

‘INTO THE VOID’
MEDIUM: ANALOGUE COLLAGE

ANDY BRATTON

@ESCALATOR73

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

Sitting at my desk for hours poring over a stack of magazine cuttings looking for connections, opposites, reflection, similarities, pattern. Just looking, waiting for the magic to happen... hours of looking, pairing, piecing, playing, trying. Sat waiting, looking, looking and waiting...

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

...then, the connection. An image sparks a response. A connection is made, A colour. A shape. A connection. I have waited, sought this moment, and by chance, it came. A new image is created. One from chance. Hours, sometimes days are spent looking at images looking for these moments. Sometimes these chances happen quickly, firing like synapses. Sometimes they don't.

You describe hours - sometimes days - spent looking, pairing, and waiting for "the magic to happen." Is waiting an active part of your practice, or a necessary frustration? How do you understand the role of patience in encountering chance?

Waiting is definitely an active part of my practice. I can leave pieces laying on my desk for days sometimes weeks. As I see connections I start to play, offering pieces together, one piece may suggest a new direction, but it's never through frustration, it's play. And being patient in that

because "it will do", in my mind "it fits". That placement only occurs through the patience to see those chance connections and seizing them at that moment.

'POSTAGE LABEL'

You search for connections - colour, shape, reflection, opposites. Do you believe these connections already exist within the material, or are you constructing them through your perception?

They already exist, waiting to be found, I just discover them. That may be made at the stage of playing with the pieces. Quite possibly it's made subconsciously during the materials curation, has a connection already been found in that process? Some of the connections I feel are obvious others are discreet, but they are there waiting for me to find them, bring them together, give them meaning, bring a new narrative and future to their being.

You describe a moment when "an image sparks a response." Can you identify what shifts internally when that spark occurs? Is it intuitive, emotional, logical, or something else?

It's like discovering a hidden story, how can I bring this to light? I'm always looking for narratives and that moment an image talks to me is the magic. I want to find the best way to unravel its new meaning to me, that's a logical process, finding the pieces to complete the story, a bit like a visual detective, but not discovering the facts, more like creating them to suit.

'NOW YOU SEE ME, NOW YOU DON'T'

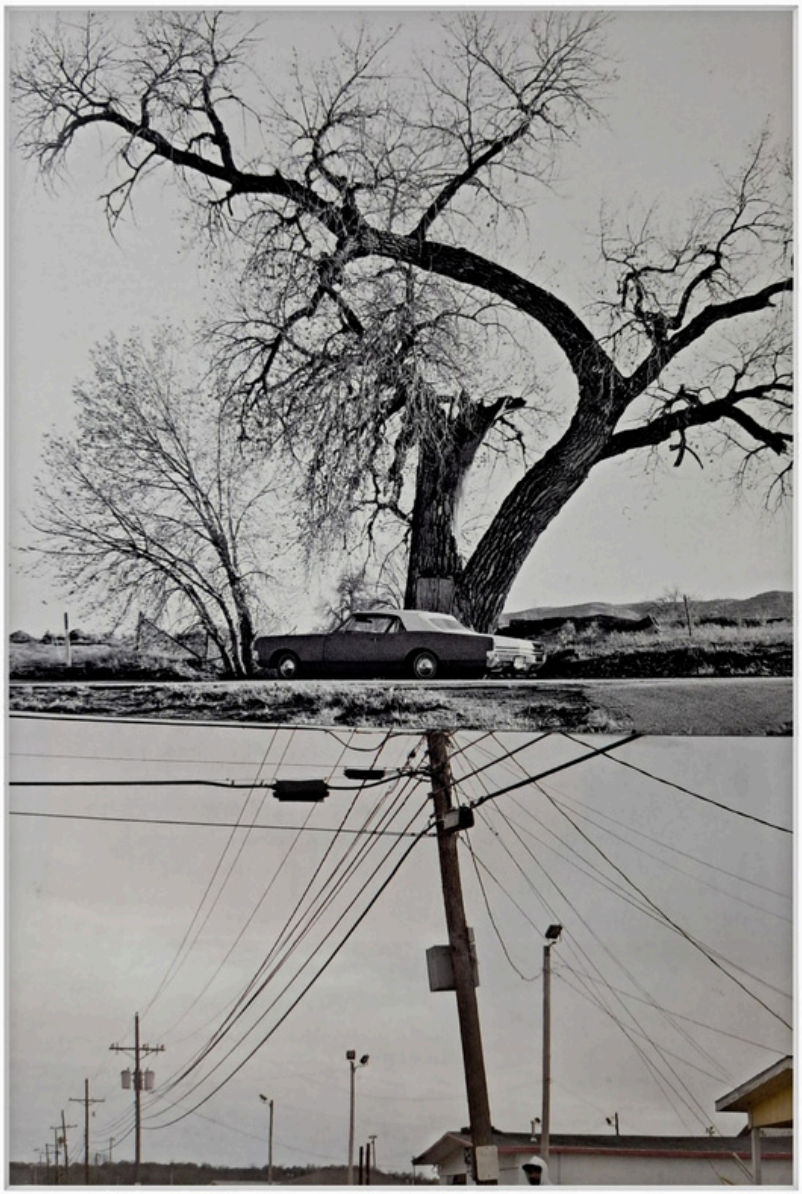
'PENGUINS'
MEDIUM: ANALOGUE COLLAGE

Your collages are made from curated magazine cuttings. How does curation interact with chance? Does selecting your source material limit randomness or intensify it?

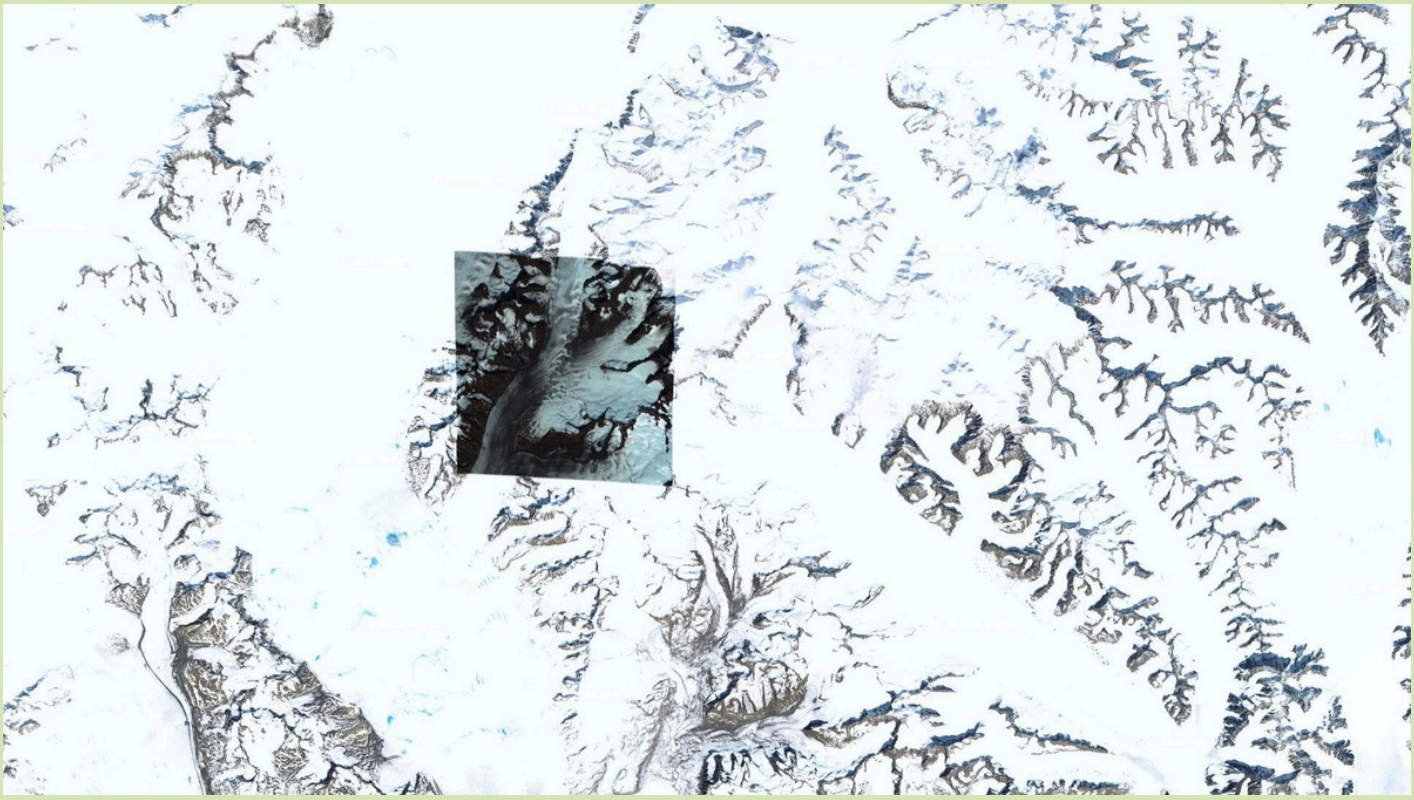
I choose to curate over a period of days or weeks; I find this way I don't pigeonhole my curation to a particular mood that's within. For instance, I may be in an architecture frame of mind one day and the next day, week, it could be texture, colour, people. Over a period of time this cocktail of images fills my desk. That random selection in front of me certainly intensifies the chance element for sure. It reveals connections, relationships and harmony between ideas and images that with controlled curation would never occur.

Many of your works are small - 6x4 inches, altered playing cards - Does working at an intimate scale change your relationship to the mundane? Does smallness heighten subtlety or concentration?

The size of my work is dictated by many things, and in no order, they include to start with my working space, I have a corner desk in the dining room, just enough space for a pile of images a cutting mat, scalpel and a glue stick. Because it's 'my space' I don't need to pack away every night which allows and shapes my working process. I've always been a detail guy, that intense packing in of information and I do find that working small makes your decision-making even more on point. Each piece has to add value to the narrative, or it doesn't belong. Each piece is as important regardless of its size or position. There is no room for half decisions, no 'it will do' pieces. Like a visual poem, every piece a valued word.



'COMMUNICATION NETWORK'



MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

AURELIE CRISETIG

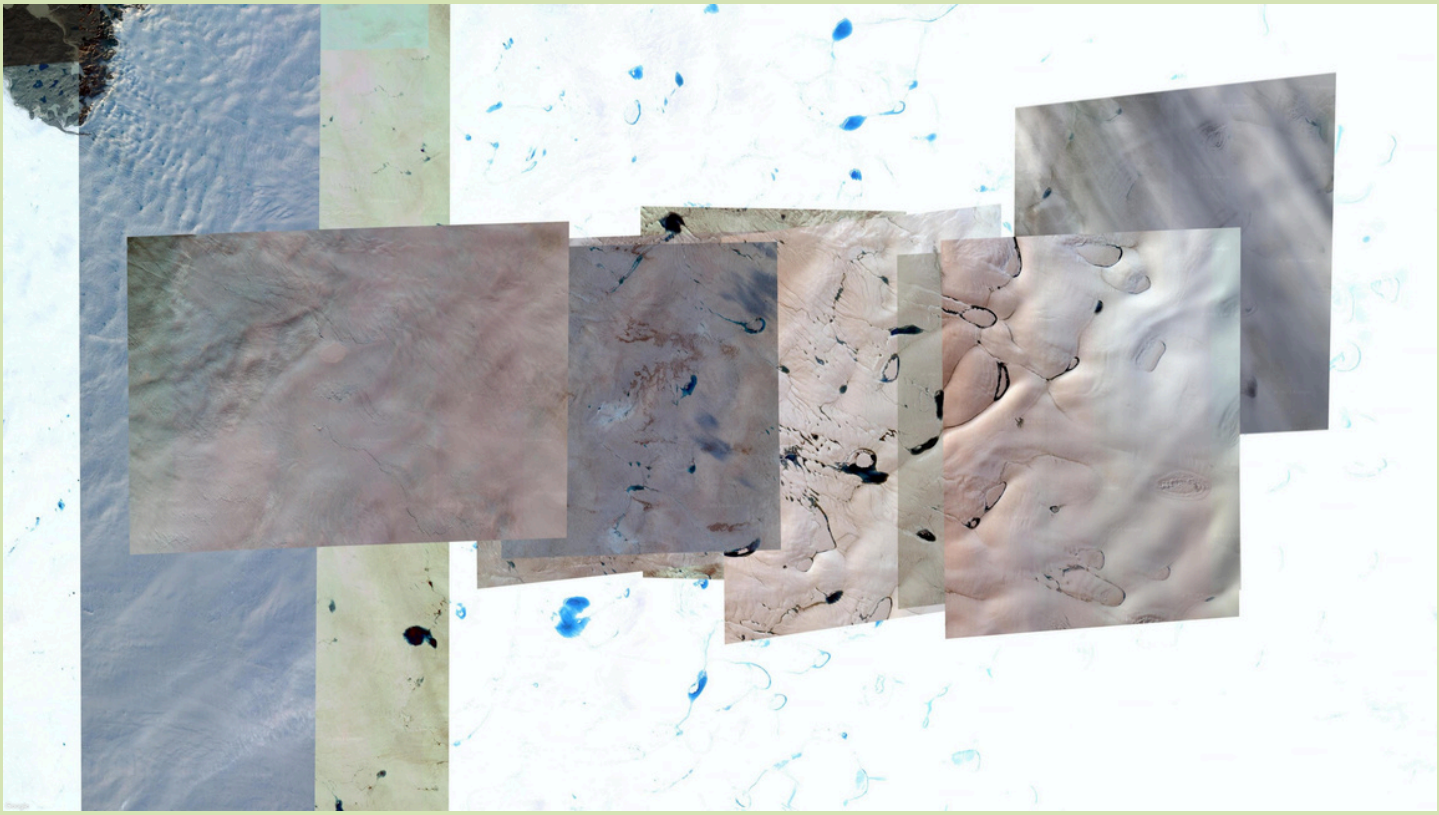
@AURELIECRISETIG

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

In (dis)locations, I approach the mundane not through everyday objects or daily routines, but through the ordinary act of digital seeing, the satellite images we consult without question, the seamless landscapes we assume are neutral representations of the world. These digital views have become part of our mundane experience of understanding place, yet their construction is anything but simple. By merging multiple satellite renderings taken at different times, climates, and environmental conditions, I expose how unstable this supposedly “mundane” digital gaze actually is. The familiar landscapes we expect to encounter become fragmented, layered, and contradictory. In this way, the work challenges the reliability of the everyday tools we use to comprehend geography and the natural world. The ‘mundane’ in this project is the normalised, invisible infrastructure of digital mapping itself, its biases, glitches, and distortions. By making these ruptures visible, I disrupt the illusion of clarity and simplicity that defines our daily interaction with digital topography.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance is embedded in both the creation and the conceptual foundation of (dis)locations. The work relies on satellite imagery, data captured continuously, automatically, and without human intervention. Each dataset carries accidental elements: atmospheric interference, seasonal shifts, environmental changes, errors in stitching, algorithmic smoothing, and the unpredictable moments when the technology malfunctions. When I collect and merge multiple renderings, these unintended variations collide. Glitches appear where images fail to align; colours shift as seasons overlap; shadows distort where the algorithm misreads terrain. None of these outcomes can be fully anticipated. Chance becomes a co-author, revealing the fragility and partiality of machine vision. This unpredictability reflects the broader theme of environmental instability. Just as climate patterns now behave erratically, the digital landscapes in the work fracture and transform unexpectedly. By embracing the role of chance, the project highlights the tension between control and uncertainty, between our desire to document the natural world and the realities of technological and ecological disruption.



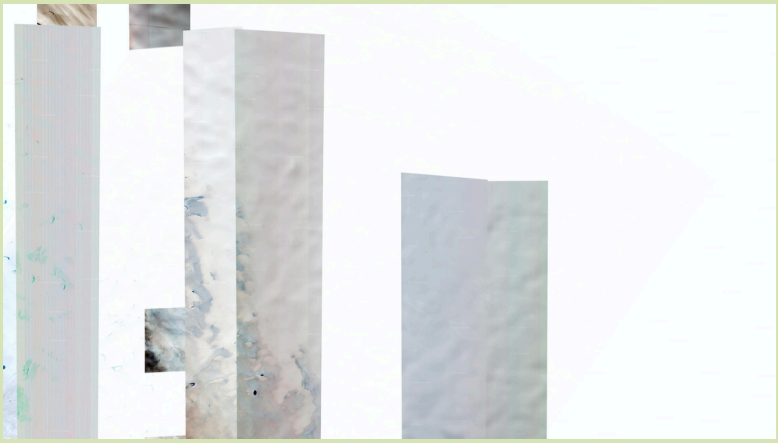
MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

You describe the mundane not as objects or routines, but as the invisible normalisation of digital mapping. What does it mean to treat infrastructure itself as a site of the mundane? How does this shift the definition of "everyday"?

For me, infrastructure like roads, pipelines, satellites, data networks, is everywhere in our daily lives, but almost always invisible. By focusing on it, I'm trying to highlight the systems that quietly shape how we move, communicate, and perceive the world. It changes the idea of the "everyday" from just the things we do or see, to the structures that make those things possible. In my work, photographing urban grids or layering satellite images brings these hidden patterns into view. Suddenly, the everyday isn't just routines or objects, it's the invisible scaffolding that quietly orders our lives.

Glitches, misalignments, and distortions emerge when datasets collide. Are glitches failures, aesthetic opportunities, or evidences of truth? What role do they play conceptually in your work?

Glitches feel like all of those things at once. They show where a system has limits, but they also reveal unexpected patterns or forms that wouldn't exist otherwise. In my work, misalignments and distortions expose the gap between representation and reality, making visible the things that data normally hides. Conceptually, I see them as productive disruptions, as moments where chance creates new visual language. They're a way of exploring imperfection, contingency, and the unpredictability of both urban spaces and digital systems.



MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

You describe chance as embedded in automated data capture. At what point does authorship shift from you to the machine? Where do you intervene, and where do you relinquish control?

I think authorship in my work is shared with the machine. Automated capture introduces moments I can't control, and those moments are part of the work. My role is to curate, select, and frame, deciding what to keep, how to layer it, and how to present it. I step back when the machine produces overlaps or distortions I couldn't have planned, letting chance play its role. That tension between control and letting go is central. It creates a dialogue between what I see and what the system produces, and that's where the work lives.

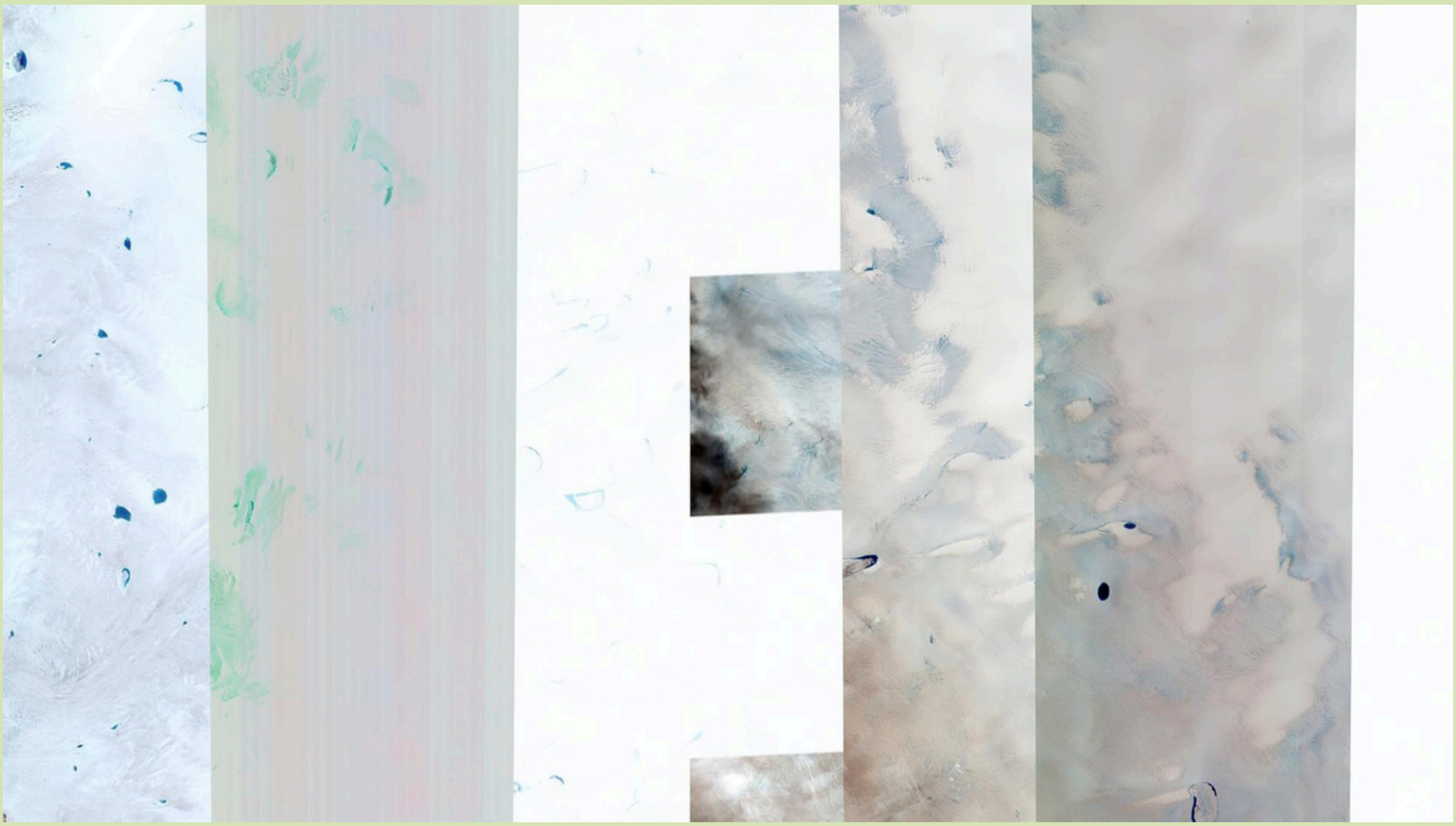
By merging satellite renderings across seasons and climates, you collapse time into a single image. Is this temporal layering an act of disruption, mourning, acceleration, or reconstruction?

It's really all of those things at once. Bringing multiple times together disrupts linear perception, but it also carries a sense of loss, a quiet mourning for change in cities or landscapes. At the same time, it accelerates how we perceive time by compressing multiple moments into one image. And it reconstructs a kind of narrative that never existed in reality, but feels meaningful when we see it. Temporal layering lets me think about change, continuity, and rupture all at once, showing the life of a place in a single frame.

You draw parallels between ecological disruption and technological malfunction. Do you see digital distortion as metaphor, mirror, or symptom of environmental crisis?

I see it as all three. Distortions can act as a metaphor, making environmental change visible in a way we can perceive. They can mirror the fragility and imperfection of the systems around us, both natural and man-made. And sometimes, they feel like a symptom, pointing to the instability inherent in networks that sustain life, whether ecological or technological. Glitches let me make connections between these worlds, showing that both systems are fragile, interdependent, and always in flux.

MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY



MEDIUM: PHOTOGRAPHY

‘RAIN STATION’
MEDIUM: STILL FROM FILM

ALICE BLANCO

@AXEL_BLANCO9989

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

I'm an experimental filmmaker, whose main influences are Jonas Mekas, Stan Brakhage and Marie Menken. And their films tackle the mundane through the observational power of the camera. The camera does not lie when filming. I find the mundane the truest thing in life as it never lies. Birds flying in the air don't lie, rain falling doesn't lie. It's all true and real.

SCAN TO VIEW WORK

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Filming in general is a massive game of chance because you never know what you are gonna get. You never know when that lightning cloud you're filming is gonna send forth a fork of lightning. So always look at what you see. Never look away.

‘SOOTHER’
MEDIUM: INK ON SWEET WRAPPER

BARBARA JONES

@BARBART2002

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

Much of what we observe as we go through our day is unremarkable and mundane. My intention is to create art from the everyday "stuff of life", such as screen protectors and sweet wrappers, in order to inspire the viewer's appreciation of such humble items.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

The random nature of the cracked lines of the screen protectors and the accidental pattern of wrinkles in the sweet wrapper illustrate the notion of chance. All of the lines and creases recorded through random interaction are unintentional and arbitrary, but are all the more beautiful for that reason.

In Wear and Tear 1 & 2, the cracked screen protector becomes a record of repeated drops and collisions. Do you see these cracks primarily as aesthetic forms, or as traces of lived experience? How important is narrative to their transformation into art?

I view the cracks primarily as aesthetic forms, marks that create a composition to be experienced in its own right. At first glance, I believe that the viewer would not necessarily identify the origin of these marks, so would be free to enjoy the random pattern created within the rectangular frame. On closer inspection, they may begin to recognize the familiar shape of a mobile phone. This recognition, along with the title "Wear and Tear," will lead to an understanding of how the cracks have been achieved. At this point, the imagination may come into play as the viewer ponders the incidents that have taken place in order to create this beautiful, fractured array of lines and tones. While the narrative behind this work is integral to a full appreciation of its meaning, it is not a crucial factor in its transformation into art.

'WEAR AND TEAR 1
MEDIUM: INTAGLIO PRINT

‘WEAR AND TEAR 2
MEDIUM: INTAGLIO PRINT

You emphasise that the cracks and creases are unintentional and arbitrary. Would these works hold the same meaning if the fractures were deliberately created? How essential is true accident to their value?

I believe that the true meaning of these works as instances of chance would be lost if the cracks and creases were deliberately created. Intentional mark making can never mimic randomness. The value of these works is intrinsically tied to the fact that chance has created the pattern of marks. It reminds me of observing the chance patterns made by vapour trails in the sky. Patterns or words can be made using emissions from planes, but this intentional use of the effect bears no relation to the random overlapping of lines from vapour trails resulting from several planes flying in different directions or taking diverse pathways. The accidental composition of marks is exciting and inspiring, whereas the selected colours and words in sky writing are predictable and conventional. When making his artwork “The Large Glass,” Duchamp delighted in the smashed surface which was the result of an accident. He said, “It’s a lot better with the cracks, a hundred times better. It’s the destiny of things.” The cracks were celebrated by Duchamp, who sought to incorporate the element of chance into his art. In fact, Duchamp was so pleased with the accidental fractured pattern that he meticulously recreated every crack when making a miniature replica of this work for his “La Boite-en-Valise” artwork.

You ink the raised surfaces of the sweet wrapper to highlight its wrinkles (Soother). At what point does your intervention begin to shape or reinterpret the randomness of the material? Are you revealing chance, or collaborating with it?

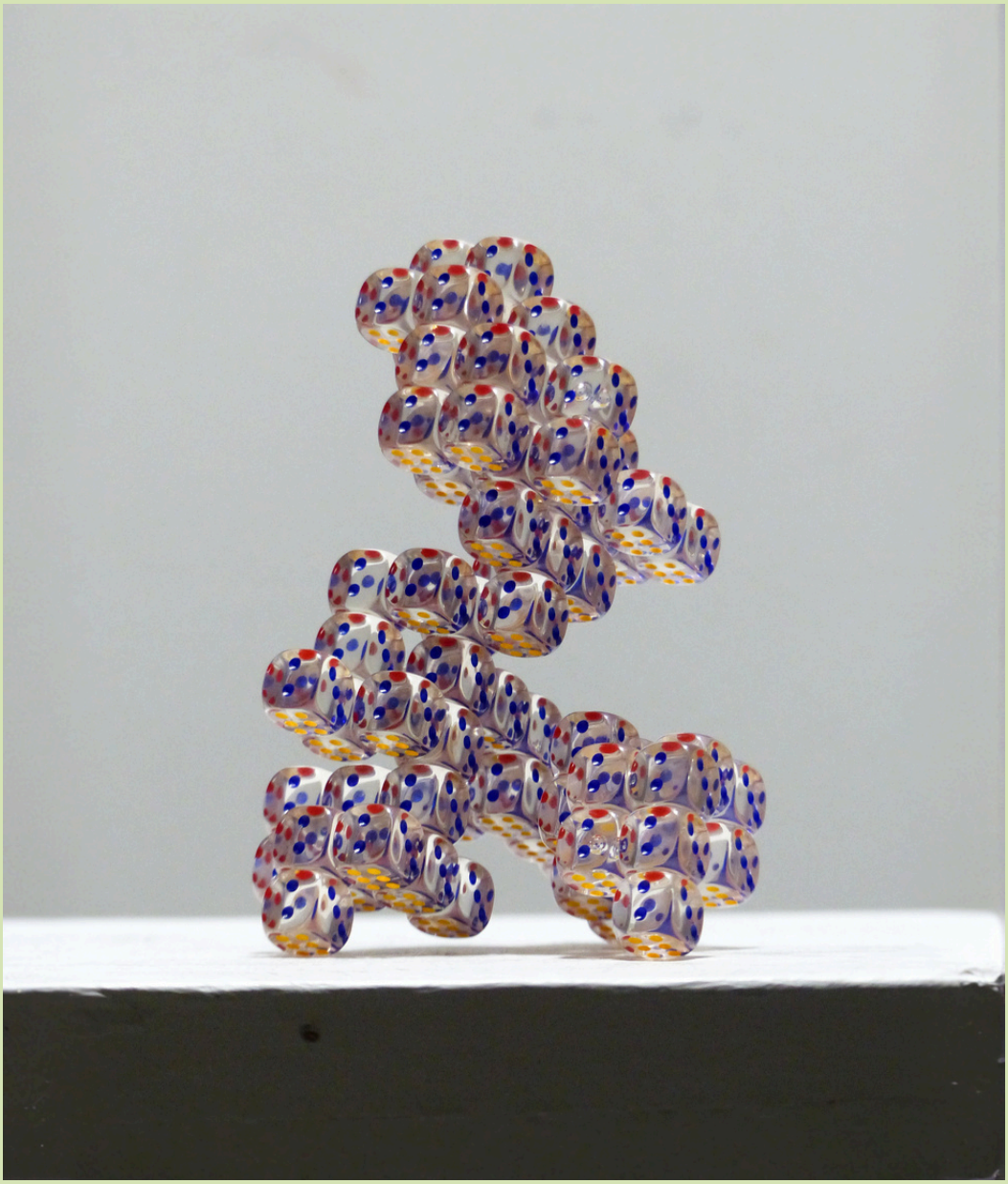
In applying ink, I am emphasizing the random creases in the sweet wrapper rather than imposing structure upon it. I presume that the sweets are machine-wrapped in a factory, so, to some extent, there must be a repeat pattern within the processed mark making. But in unwrapping the sweet, I have probably created extra wrinkles which are unintentional and the result of chance. In that sense, you could say I have collaborated with chance in creating this work.

You reference the Japanese aesthetic of wabi-sabi. Does your practice aim to cultivate acceptance of imperfection, or to reframe imperfection as something actively celebratory?

In my practice, I aim both to engender an acceptance of imperfection and to actively celebrate it as the central core of artistic creativity. As an artist, I aim to disrupt the viewer's feelings of order and control, lead them to an acceptance of the imperfect nature of life, and embrace the random events which impact all of us. Accidents, mistakes, inaccuracies, errors, and chaos all lead to unpredictable, exciting, and surprising results. I believe all artists should allow for imperfection because that is where real creativity lies.

Screen protectors and sweet wrappers are designed to be discarded. How does working with disposable materials alter their status? Does the act of elevation challenge consumer culture, or simply recontextualise it?

Making art from everyday disposable materials will always raise their status. Art history is full of artists using the everyday stuff of life as their material, whether it's Duchamp presenting a urinal as sculpture or Picasso including a masthead from a newspaper in his collages. I do not believe that Duchamp and Picasso were challenging consumer culture, just referencing it rather than painting a picture of it. In a similar way, I am not making a point about "consumer culture," just observing throwaway items and re-presenting them so that the viewer can develop a stronger appreciation of the beauty of everyday things. In "Wear and Tear" 1 and 2, I have made art from the screen protectors by printing them in a press as intaglio plates. The screen protectors themselves remain as disposable items. In "Soother," I am presenting a sweet wrapper as art, albeit with the addition of carefully applied ink to highlight the marks made through folding. I could have made an alternative version of this artwork without the addition of ink. This would be a true transformation of a disposable material into art in a similar way to Duchamp's readymades.

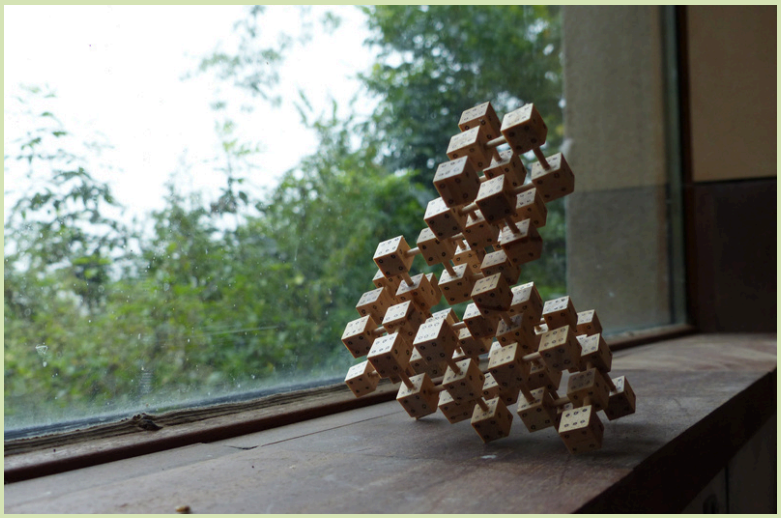


‘100 ROLLS OF A TRANSPARENT DICE WITH COLOUR’
MEDIUM: SCULPTURE

CAMERON LINGS

@CAMERON_LINGS

‘1000 ROLLS OF A 100 SIDED-DICE’
MEDIUM: SCULPTURE



'100 ROLLS' ‘100 ROLLS OF A HANDMADE WOODEN DICE’
MEDIUM: SCULPTURE

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

My works incorporate 'the mundane' through their process of drawing attention to otherwise unnoticed and unrecorded patterns. Here, I incorporate a familiar object of a dice and explore the possibility of mapping its outcomes.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

My sculptures explore the realm of 'chance' through its ability to map, visualize and record mathematical probability and randomized outcomes.

'100 ROLLS' ‘100 ROLLS OF A CARDBOARD DICE’
MEDIUM: SCULPTURE

'50 ROL '50 ROLLS OF A BLACK DICE'
MEDIUM: SCULPTURE

CRISIA CONSTANTINE

@CHOCOLATE_CON_PIMENTA

Before 11:00

By: Crisia Constantine

From 10:00am onwards you start checking the time. You are not that hungry. You just need to arrive before everyone else. If you get there before 11:00am, the kitchen is still empty. After 11:00am, the others start coming in. You aim for 10:55am. That gets you there at 10:57am, and you can pretend it was accidental.

Sometimes you miss it because you are writing one more line, one more paragraph, one more idea that feels urgent enough, important enough. A friend once told you it wouldn't make a difference. It didn't. But you didn't want to hear that then.

If you arrive too late, they are already there, taking their time. Heating their lunches, stirring slowly, tasting, adding a bit of spice, laughing. They always have a good time together.

You have missed lunch before because of this. Because you don't want them to see your instant noodles. Because you don't want them to see how you make them. Because you don't want them to see how you rinse the fork twice. Sometimes three.

The studio you lived in before had cockroaches. The dorm was worse. You felt them crawl on your legs at night and didn't turn the light on because you already knew. No matter how much you cleaned, no matter how much the room smelled of disinfectant, you would sit down for a cigarette and one would appear, thick and slow, climbing the wall like a message. Like a bad omen. You felt it then, but you just don't want to say it again now.

The cockroaches crawled all night. You rinsed everything again in the morning.

You rinse cutlery. If you drop something, you scrub it. If you scrub it, you rinse it again. If you rinse it again, you lose minutes. If you lose minutes, someone might walk in. You get angry at yourself for dropping it. For creating more work. For being tired already from writing, and then making you even more tired with all this rinsing.

Cockroaches survive nuclear fallout.

If you arrive early enough, you get to use your bowl.

It's from Kmart. White with a Nordic-looking pattern that imitates something expensive. Something Scandinavian. Something calm. You like the lie of it. You like thinking that you get to choose. That you get to make a life for yourself. That you are someone who eats slowly. Someone who doesn't check clocks.

Sometimes the girl in the back takes it first. She eats fruit from it all morning. Kiwi slices arranged like she's rationing colour. She once asked if you were French. From someone else it might have sounded like a compliment. From her, it felt like an accusation.

She never says please. Never says hi. Never says bye. She comes to your desk sharply — Do you have a pen? — as if the question itself has wronged her. Anger leaks from her pores. From the nose. From the skin around the pimples. Later she tells you why. She applied for Permanent Residency six months ago. No answer yet. She needs to know if she can stay in the country. She needs to know if she is allowed to build a future here. It usually takes years, you say. She already knows that. She checks her email for immigration updates. You check the clock for the kitchen.

You boil the water. You open the sachet. You pour everything into the same bowl you will eat from. You cannot stand people who use many dishes.

The tall man from Accounting brings food in a container. Puts it on a plate to heat it. Puts it onto another plate to eat. Leaves a trail of bowls and spoons and lids like it's someone else's responsibility. He assumes someone will clean. He assumes space. He assumes time. He expands. You compress. He multiplies plates. You subtract yourself.

The noodles cost less than a dollar a packet. Enough sodium to preserve something. Enough to get through the afternoon. You don't want them to see that this is what you eat most days. You don't want them to see that you count time like this.

If you arrive early, you feel somehow safe. If someone sees you rinse the fork again, they might laugh. If someone smells the noodles, they might comment. If someone asks whether you'd like to join them, you will have to answer.

It is easier to arrive at 10:55.

Sometimes you still miss it. You are writing. You believe one more sentence will fix something. You believe finishing the paragraph will change something. It doesn't.

You arrive at 11:03 and the bowl is gone. The fruit girl is slicing another kiwi. The tall man is rearranging plates. Someone is heating fish. You stand there holding the packet.

You think of cockroaches who survive anything. You adapt. You wait. You have lived in smaller rooms than this. You have cleaned up after worse than tall men and dirty plates. You know how to stay quiet.

You open the packet anyway. You use a knife. You rinse it twice. You rinse it without thinking. Like checking the door twice.

There are three sachets — oil, powder, paste. Some days the oil jumps out and stains the counter. Some days it refuses to leak. You have to use a knife again. You have to rinse it twice.

The office kitchen has a hot water filter that burns your hand. You try to use it anyway. Then you give up and pour from the kettle. You wrap the bowl in paper towels and carry it back to your desk. Two layers. Sometimes three.

Once, someone saw you walking like that. Bowl wrapped, arms stiff. They didn't say anything. Just held the door open longer than necessary. You remember that.

You cover the bowl with more paper towels while it softens.

You learned noodles before you learned rent. Before contracts, before visas, before tax numbers. A kettle in a borrowed kitchen. A packet split between two people. Someone saying, "It's fine, we'll eat later."

You start believing small things.
If you arrive before 11, the day will go well.
If the oil opens cleanly, something will change.
If you finish the paragraph before the kettle clicks, the email will come.

You don't believe it. But you keep doing it.

You rinse the fork twice.

You eat.

Tomorrow you will try again for 10:55.

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

My work treats the mundane as a site of density rather than neutrality. I focus on ordinary gestures — eating, waiting, cleaning, checking time — and approach them as carriers of memory, precarity, and care. By staying close to small, repeated actions, I explore how everyday routines hold unspoken histories, particularly around migration, survival, and social invisibility. I avoid dramatic framing and instead let meaning accumulate through detail, restraint, and repetition, allowing the familiar to become quietly charged. In this way, the mundane is not background but structure: a space where vulnerability, endurance, and interior life are held in plain sight.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance enters my work through both process and structure. I write within lived environments rather than controlled settings, allowing interruptions, timing, and small contingencies to shape the form. Fragments often arise from ordinary disruptions — a routine slightly altered, a memory surfacing unexpectedly, a gesture noticed too late — and I follow these shifts rather than imposing a fixed narrative arc. I work with repetition, drift, and compression so that the piece remains responsive to what emerges rather than what is predetermined. In this way, chance operates as a compositional force, shaping rhythm, pacing, and the emotional logic of the work.

You describe the mundane as "structure" rather than background. At what point does a repeated gesture (rinsing, checking the clock, arriving at 10:55) become architecture rather than habit?

I think repetition becomes architecture when it stops being optional. A habit is something you could abandon without consequence. Architecture is something that holds you up. In the text, the gestures – rinsing, checking the clock, arriving early – aren't aesthetic decisions. They organise how the narrator moves through space. They determine when she eats, how she occupies the kitchen, how visible she becomes. At that point, repetition stops being background behaviour and starts functioning like a built environment. It produces corridors, blind spots, thresholds. It becomes a structure you live inside rather than something you simply do. The creative act emerges from this architecture of repetition – writing becomes another form of arriving before 11:00, another attempt to negotiate visibility.

In Before 11:00, small acts (rinsing twice, arriving early, opening oil cleanly) feel almost talismanic. Do you see these repetitions as attempts to control chance, or as acknowledgements of its inevitability?

Probably both at once. The gestures carry a quiet superstition – if I arrive early, if the oil opens cleanly, if I finish the paragraph in time – but the narrator doesn't fully believe in them. The repetition isn't magical thinking in a hopeful sense. It's closer to maintenance. A way of negotiating uncertainty without resolving it. The rituals don't eliminate chance; they make it bearable. They create the feeling of a small perimeter around an uncontrollable world. So, I see them less as attempts to master chance and more as ways of living alongside it.

The text is governed by time — 10:55, 11:03, the kettle clicking. Is time in your work a neutral measure, or a force that produces vulnerability?

In the piece, time isn't neutral. It behaves more like pressure. The specificity of 10:55 or 11:03 turns time into something spatial – almost like a narrowing corridor. Certain minutes are safe; others are exposed. Vulnerability emerges in those thresholds. Missing the window by a few minutes changes the social landscape entirely. This way, time isn't just measuring experience; it's actively shaping the narrator's degree of safety. It determines when she can disappear and when she becomes visible.

The anxiety of being seen (eating noodles, rinsing a fork) drives the narrative tension. How does the presence of others transform ordinary acts into charged events? Does chance intensify under observation?

Ordinary gestures become charged the moment they are witnessed. Eating noodles, rinsing a fork, carrying a bowl – these are neutral in isolation. But under observation they become legible as signals: about class, migration, precarity, cleanliness, difference. The tension comes from that sudden legibility. The narrator isn't afraid of the acts themselves, but of what they might be read as. Observation collapses the distance between private logic and public interpretation. In that sense, chance intensifies when others are present because meaning becomes unstable and harder to control.

Memories of cockroaches, rinsing rituals, and sensory vigilance suggest embodied memory. Does chance in your work operate psychologically, physically, or socially - and how do these layers interact?

I think the text treats chance as layered. Psychologically, it appears as vigilance – the internalised anticipation that something might go wrong. Physically, it lives in the body: rinsing, carrying heat carefully, reacting to sensory memory. Socially, it emerges in systems that are unevenly distributed – migration status, shared spaces, institutional time. These layers reinforce each other. A social precarity becomes a bodily reflex. A bodily reflex becomes a private ritual. Chance isn't located in a single domain; it circulates between structures, memory, and the body. The narrator isn't just responding to randomness, but to the accumulated residue of living where randomness has consequences.

‘IMPERTINENT DETERIORATION’
MEDIUM: MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER

CYLENA SIMONDS

@CYLENASIMONDS

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

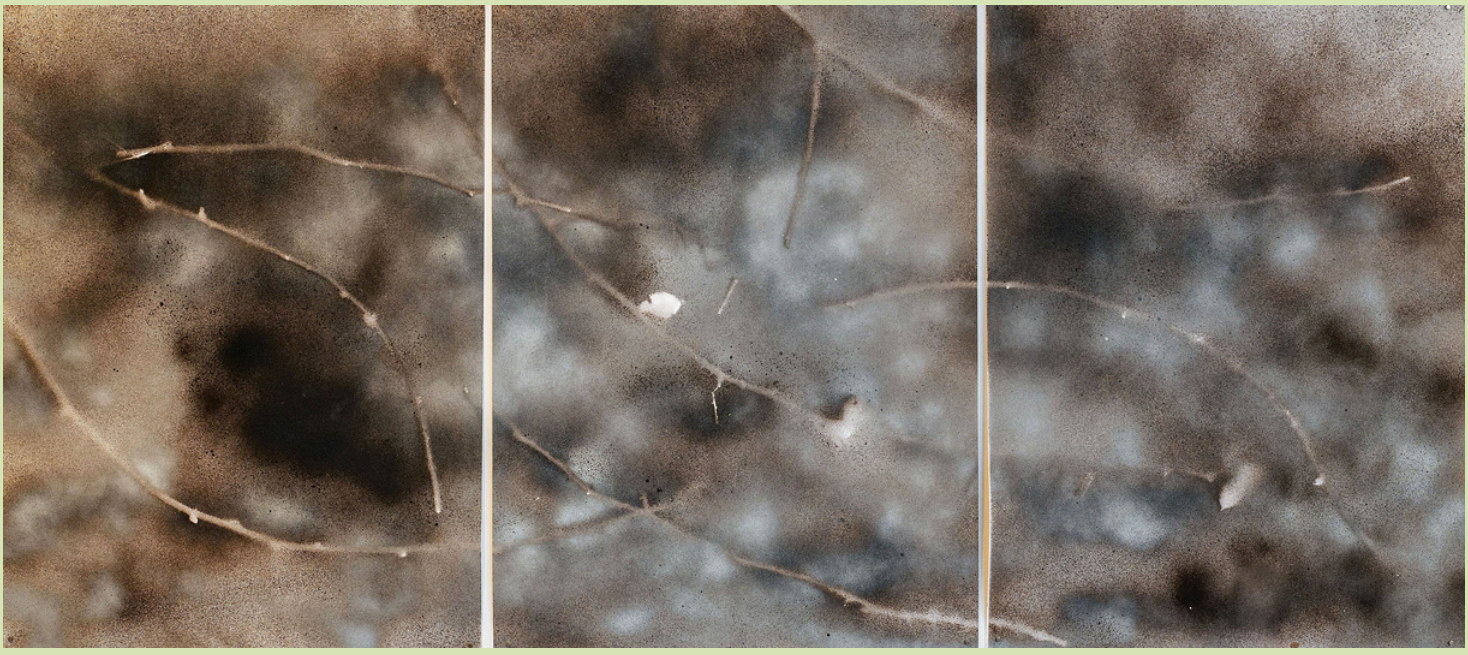
The work I am submitting uses brambles I collect from neglected sites around Plymouth. Briars/brambles proliferate. In this way, they are mundane, common in both rural and urban spaces, unwanted but stubbornly steadfast.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

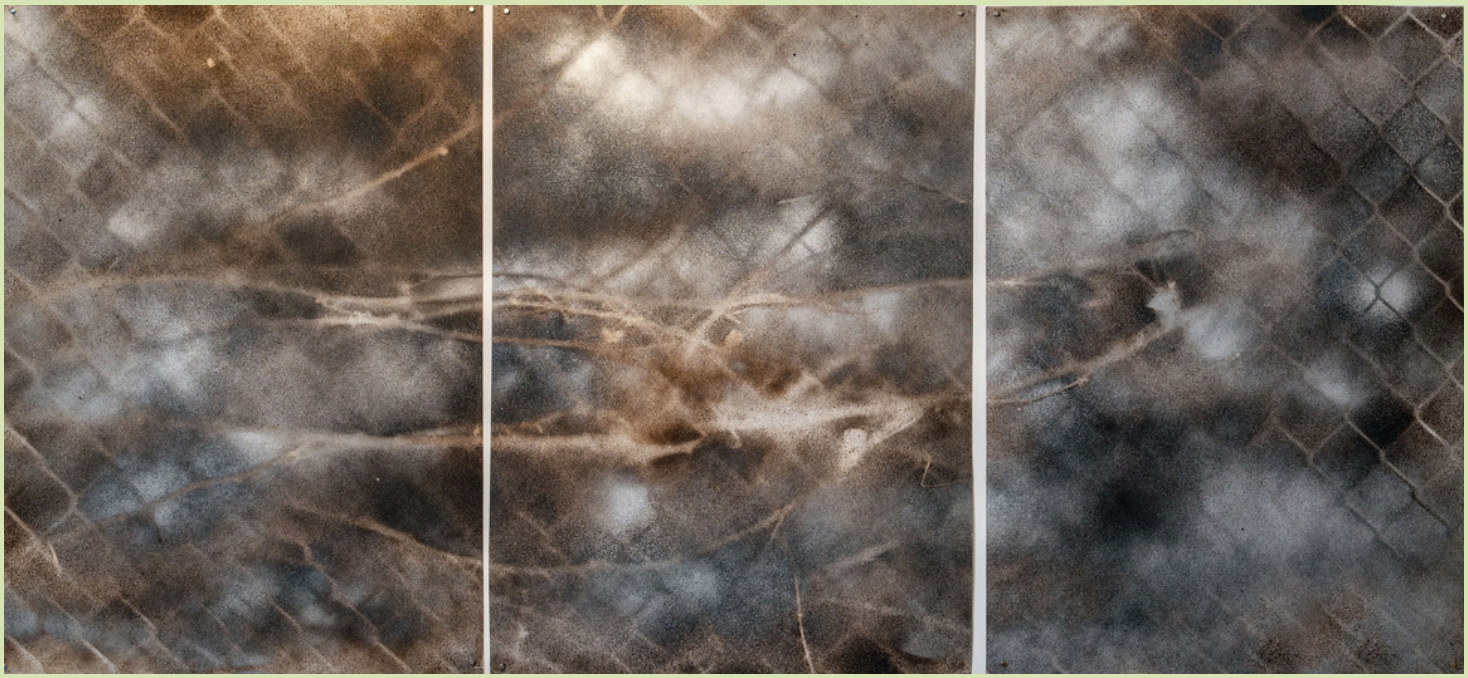
The work resulting from my process is created by chance. I begin by arranging briar branches across white paper on the ground. First bitumen is sprayed onto the briars and paper in a single motion, then chrome automobile paint. The variations in tone are achieved by changing the distance the spray is to the paper, creating an illusion of depth. Immediately after spraying I remove the briars. The formal elements, such as areas where the image breaks apart and paper is exposed; organic debris stuck to paper; scratches from removing briars, are unpredictable and unrepeatable.

You describe brambles as unwanted yet steadfast, present in both rural and urban spaces. What draws you to something so common and often disregarded? Is its mundanity tied to visibility, resilience, or neglect?

I think brambles are mundane in that they proliferate in unlikely and sometimes inhospitable environments. They are all around us but at the same time either ignored or reviled.
When I began collecting briars from around where I live in Plymouth, curious passersby thank me for "giving up my weekend" to dispose of the nuisance. Once a man leaned out of his window and called out: "You getting rid of those for us, darling?" A woman's voice behind him laughed. They are stubborn and, in spite of the fact they provide fruit, most people would gladly obliterate them.



'A CLEVERNESS OF BRIARS'
MEDIUM: MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER



‘PERPETUAL RIOT’

MEDIUM: MI

You begin by arranging briars before spraying in a single motion. How much of the final image is determined in the arrangement stage, and how much is surrendered to the spray and removal process?

Resistance to control is a key part of my process, my relationship to materials, and theme of the Br’re Rabbit folktale that inspires the series. Rather than a surrender, I think of my process as a dialogue between the briars, bitumen, chrome paint and myself. The final image is the result of the conversation. It begins with a structure, the arranged briars, but as the bitumen and chrome are introduced, the conversation digresses unpredictably into the final work

You emphasise spraying in one continuous movement. Is this gesture an attempt to preserve immediacy and prevent over-control? What would be lost if you allowed yourself multiple passes?

I like the physicality of working with materials. Whether I am making sculpture or 2D pieces, I move often. For the pieces in this series there is also a practical reason. Using bitumen and spray paint, I need to work somewhere with good ventilation for safety. The simplest solution is to work outside but this also means I have to work quickly because even a small breeze blows the briars off the paper.

The briars are removed immediately after spraying, leaving traces, scratches and debris. Do you consider the act of removal as the true moment of creation? How important is absence to the finished work?

Removing the briars activates absences and traces which contribute to the material ambiguity of the work. Ambiguity is unfixed possibility. Similarly, my research into folktales looks for the absences, such as agency of the female characters, to consider what may have been lost/ignored and use this for creative inspiration. The scratches and thorns are also traces of the work's journey—hints of necessary elements of the work's coming into being. A clue amongst traces and ambiguity.

'SPECTRE'
MEDIUM: MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER

EMILY PRICE

FEAT. HENRIETTA AND BEATRICE

@KITSCHAFICIONADO

'STICK'

MEDIUM: COLLAGE: PAPER, PHOTOGRAPH, STICKERS, PEN, MARKER, COLOURED PENCIL

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

The scribbles and drawings enshrined in this work came from moments spent with my nieces, aged 7 and 4. Using random pieces of construction paper, old grocery bags, and the edges of documents grabbed from the recycling bin, the girls produce ungodly reams of these sketches when we play together. Their carefully crafted larger-scale works wind up framed on my wall, but I also gather these discarded scraps, sometimes directly out of the bin. Through my zine-making, I can preserve a selection of these dashed-off little sparks, inconsequential and forgotten by them but to me, profoundly charged with their imagination, humour, and love. Am I protesting against the inevitability of change and the impermanence of childhood by making zines from my nieces' leavings? Yes. Am I working through the several boxes of scraps I have lying around so I can reclaim some floor space in my office? Also yes.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

I work from a series of not-very-well-organised piles of magazines, photographs, and my own drawings, pulling out pieces whose colours or textures catch my eye. As someone living with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, extreme perfectionism haunts me: letting chance and coincidence guide my zine-making is a form of therapy. And as I flip through my completed works I feel the healing agony of releasing control as I subdue the urge to wipe off the glue stains, straighten the poorly-aligned edges, or just tear the whole thing to shreds. Making collages by hand is never going to result in a perfect product, which is why I love (?) doing it.

'RAGE'
MEDIUM: COLLAGE: PAPER, PHOTOGRAPH, STICKERS, PEN, MARKER, COLOURED PENCIL

‘DISORDER’
MEDIUM:
COLLAGE:
PAPER,
PHOTOGRAPH,
STICKERS,
PEN, MARKER,
COLOURED
PENCIL

SANCTIFY THE MUNDANE

By: Brandon J. Barnard
Originally published 21 October 2025

I have noticed a recurring element across my films - that once an object is used, or a place is visited and shown on camera, it suddenly feels special. Yes, this applies to props I made specifically for films, but it also applies to the ordinary. “This frying pan was used in ‘Eggistential’”, “‘After Images’ was filmed over there, above the barber shop”, and “this piece of wall art was made by so-and-so, I learnt that when making ‘Graffiti’”.

Random household utensils, nightclubs, and art made by strangers who are hoping to stay strangers. These mundane elements of life. The minutiae. The trivial. They all suddenly have importance to me, and the way I process the world. By giving something attention, you give it importance.

It made me wonder, if my practice is trying to ‘force chance’ in order to make discoveries, could you forcibly ‘sanctify the mundane’? Are we able to purposely create value out of anything and everything?

By allowing us to form connections with the world around us without bias, then suddenly the larger world has value outside of expectations of what should and shouldn’t be focused on. What does that mean for us caring for each other? The environment? Historical and societal conservation? I know that I struggle to unsee the label of importance on something once it has been applied. All value is decided by people – it is largely arbitrary. So why not spread the love of what should and should not be cared for?

This also removes hierarchy and prioritisation. You could argue "are priorities not a good thing?" and I annoyingly have to ask two separate questions in response. "Are our current priorities working?" and "Whose priorities are they really?". The idea of "We cannot focus on this because there are bigger issues" means that everything else is just 'not important'. The reality of the situation is that there is no 'we will get to that later' – there will always be something else 'which is important' that will take its place. If you think about what is important, it's often politics – games being played by people in power, where they are more often than not the ones who benefit. An 'all attention is good attention' situation. If that is the case, then why not share out attention? A fixation that is not the norm is seen as a disruption from life, but often a disruption from the status quo is what is needed. We are animals, and the system in which we find ourselves is not the 'default' – it is constructed and maintained by those whom it benefits.

It is funny that these conversations come about as a result of my 'silly little videos' but that is kind of the point. By allowing yourself to drift away from what other people see as important, in lots of directions, you can start to see an alternative picture, tied to many aspects of one's life.

Not only that, if you incorporate random parts of your life into what you do (be it art, work, routine) you create an appreciation for them and the desire to protect them.
It makes me think about a moment I had as a child. I was at my grandfather's place for dinner, and two older men came over to join us. I had no idea who they were, but they were so kind. Listening when I spoke, being enthusiastic with others. Just a real joy to be around. At the end of the night, I really thought 'that was so nice'. Later, some of my family members were having a conversation about how they were gay. This was my first time interacting with anyone who was gay (as far as I knew). Growing up in South Africa, being gay was seen as one of the ultimate insults – to not be manly enough. I, however, always thought about those nice old men. To insult them did not feel right. A chance occurrence. A singular nice moment. This was enough. I had some form of context for what 'gay' could be.

While that may seem like a large outcome, it is worth remembering that it all spawned from a nice meal.

My films are not these amazing masterpieces, which are so drenched in detail that you cannot help but be a changed person by the end of each viewing. However, piece by piece, the creation of these films has changed my perception of the world around me. I mean that on a micro-scale, which develops into a macro-scale.

There is this snowball effect of understanding. Once you make a connection in your brain between the 'ordinary' and something else, more connections start to rush towards the 'ordinary'. Suddenly, the 'ordinary' is interlocked with so many 'important' aspects of life, that you wonder 'how on earth could I have not noticed how tied to everything this ordinary thing is?'. Well, you just made it 'important'.

This realisation and reality are one and the same. The world is all noise. Everything. The labels you attach to entities within the noise elevate them to being recognised – separated from everything else.

So, to give something value, is merely to pay attention to it, hold it in your thoughts for a while, and see how it connects or relates to something else. I wanted to say, 'everything else', and while that is true, these additional connections happen on their own, whether you want them to or not, and also, everything may take a little too long given how much time we have. It is why we need to work together to cover our bases.

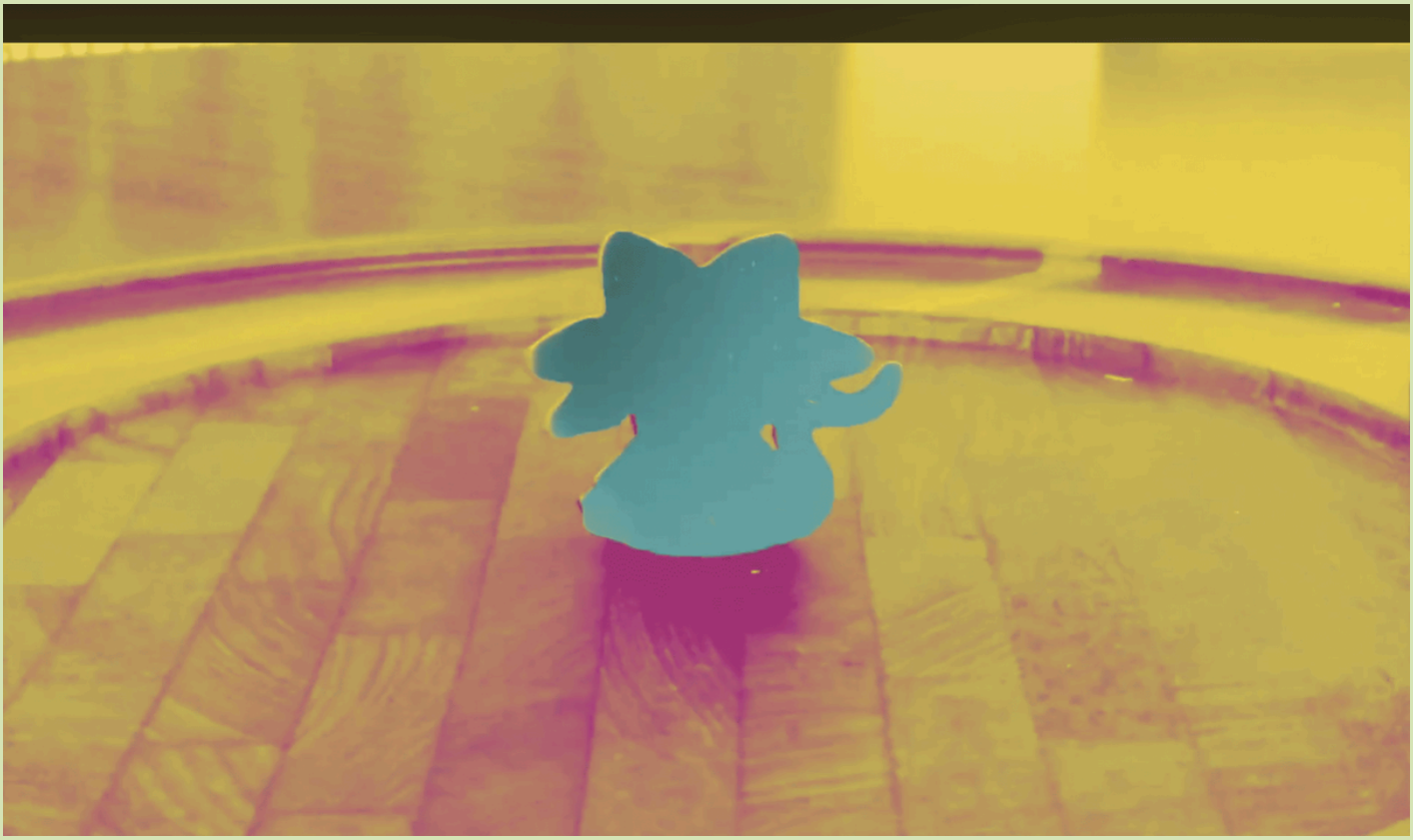
This is part of the reason why I really like local film productions and publications. Often, they are looking at something 'small' in the local community. A church, a school, a music production, an old fire station, a local resident's history. Someone (a filmmaker) spent their time getting really interested in something 'small' and shared it with everyone. They immortalised a moment.

By me consuming it, and putting my interest on it, this connection is suddenly shared. When I walk past said 'church' or 'school', it is no longer just a building. It is other people's lives and interests and histories. It gives an appreciation of sonder.
When walking through the city, there are areas I'm fond of because moments happened there. Why not try to create moments everywhere, so everywhere feels like that? Make every part of your physical map connected to a node in your mental map?

Maybe that is the most radical stance available to us - to refuse the invisible hierarchy of what is worth noticing. To assign value not just to the 'spectacular', but to whatever happens to be in front of us. Make sacredness ambient - not locked behind institutions, galleries, breaking news, or cultural permission, but evenly distributed across frying pans and bus stops and stairwells and back alleys.

SELECTED ARTISTS - PART 2

61 FIA CAVOZZI
64 HIMANSHI TYAGI
69 JAMES FREW
73 KATE FALLON-COUSINS
77 LORRAINE CLEARY
81 NEIL ADAMS
86 RICHARD EVELEIGH
90 ROBERT VERRILL
95 SEAN BW PARKER
99 SHAHAR TUCHNER
104 SOPHIA PLATTS-PALMER
108 STELLA TRIPP



‘ORDER OF CONFUSION’
MEDIUM: VIDEO COLLAGE AND SOUND

FIA CAVOZZI

@NOTHINGSQUID_

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

Is my mind boring? What we see day to day blends together, creating an abstracted mindset that accepts what's happening around us. The ordinariness of the not-normal is accepted. The mind is something one can keep to oneself or share with everyone. Where everything becomes a blur, blending into something “normal” as we choose to embrace it.

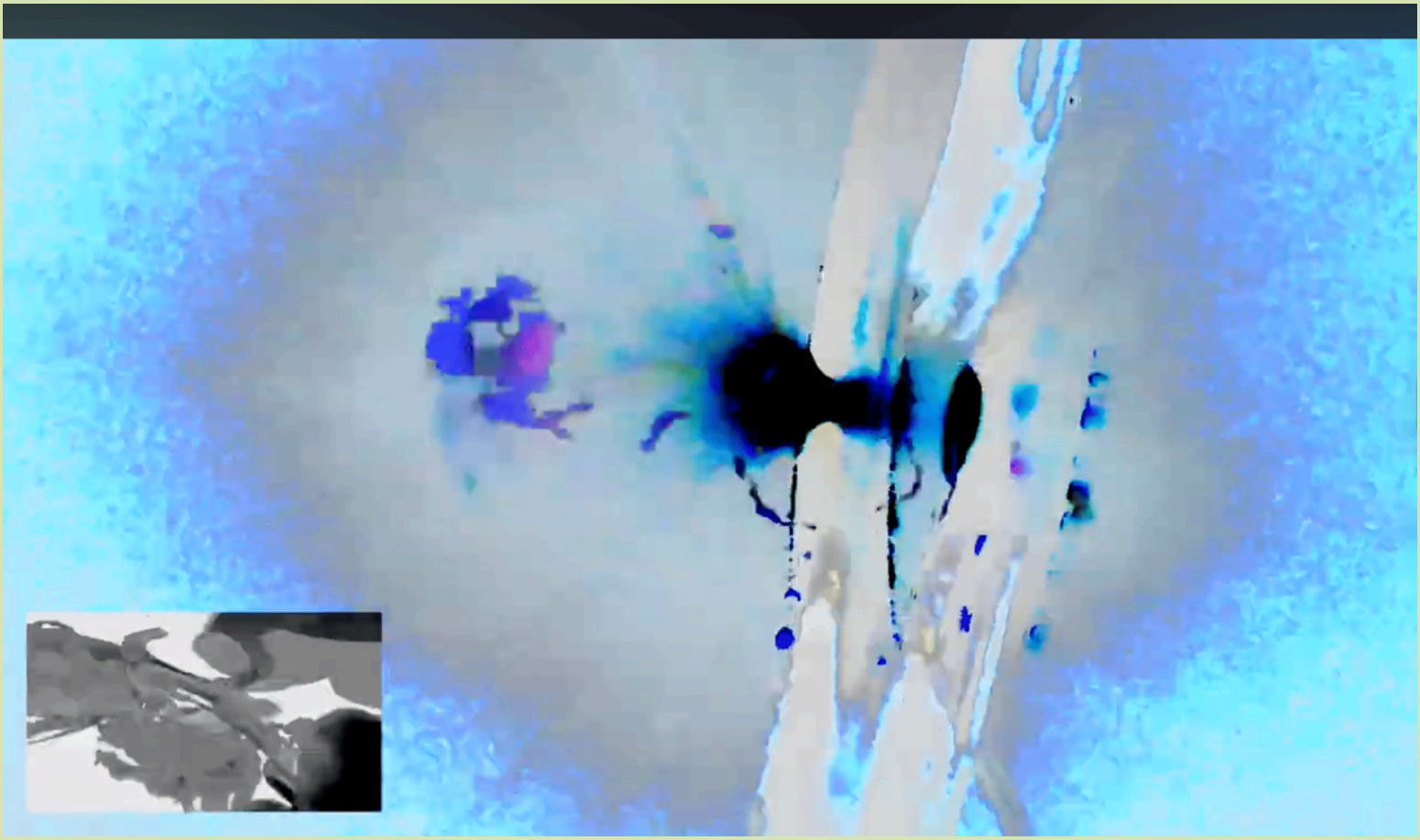
How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Showing the unpredictability of the chance of being overwhelmed or not. It's your mind that can change how you perceive what's happening.

You describe everyday life as blending into an abstracted mindset. Is the mundanity in your work located in the external world, or in the way the mind processes and flattens it?

Just looking around me, seeing the everyday life, looking at odd details within objects. Parts of the video collages are odd things I find in my everyday life, like water movements, how an object can block light, and the space within an object. Using these normal videos to create something even more abstract, I tend to overlap two or more videos to create something unfamiliar.

SCAN TO VIEW WORK



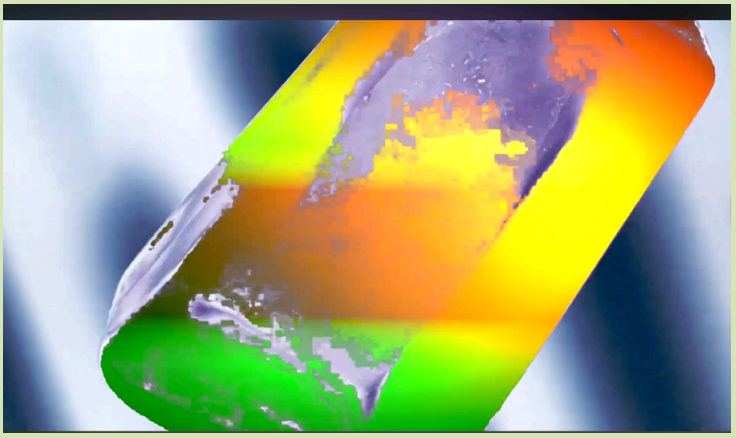
‘ORDER OF CONFUSION’
MEDIUM: VIDEO COLLAGE AND SOUND

In Order of Confusion, you aim to make the viewer feel overwhelmed. Do you see overwhelm as a form of chance - an unpredictable threshold that may or may not be crossed?

This all depends on the viewer, seeing how much they try to understand while not overthinking. As people tend to find meaning in what they want, they can decide whether they like a piece of work or not and judge it accordingly. Quick cuts to different footage and uneasy audio effects to make you think unclearly of the meaning.

You suggest viewers can either overthink the imagery or "just take it all in." Is your work offering a choice between control and surrender? How much do you guide that choice through editing and pacing?

My editing style is very experimental when it comes to video and sound. More just trying out every single possible way I could change what I originally had. I tend to speed up, zoom in, and change the colour in my videos, creating a chaotic, nearly unrecognisable effect. People can watch the whole video from start to finish, watch the middle of it, or not watch it at all; it's their choice.



You write that "everything happens with the flow of movement from the overload of sounds and shapes." How structured is that flow behind the scenes? Is it carefully composed chaos, or does chance genuinely dictate sequencing?

There is a mix of very structured and not. Parts that I think link together very well can come from a movement, texture, or colour within the video, or from a sound that almost blends the two together. As of making the video, there was no original structure to begin with. I just add what goes best within that movement. During the editing stages, I tend to see if I can have odd parts changed by the green/blue screen, leaving it to move unpredictably away from the structure I barely have.

"I never know what I'm thinking most of the time." Does uncertainty about your own thoughts become a compositional method? How do you work when meaning feels unstable?

The unstable feeling will always be there in whatever practice you do, you might just not know it yet. Even if you have a clear plan of what to do, this could change at any moment, just like in life. The meaning can come with the work you do over time; you do not need a clear path. This work and the previous similar videos I have created are produced in a spontaneous, video-editing style. I use both recent and older footage, along with audio recordings I have collected from different projects over the years.

HIMANSHI TYAGI

@VINIMINI93

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

My work responds to the idea of the ‘mundane’ by focusing on everyday workers who shape the rhythm of ordinary life — a vegetable vendor, a sugarcane juice seller, and a woman sweeping the street. These figures exist within repetitive routines that often go unnoticed. By capturing their gestures, labor, and presence, I aim to highlight the dignity and resilience embedded in daily repetition. What appears ordinary is in fact essential. The mundane, in my work, becomes a quiet narrative of survival, movement, and human endurance. It asks the viewer to pause and recognize the invisible structures that sustain everyday life.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance plays a significant role in the creation of my work. As I document everyday workers in public spaces, I cannot fully control light, movement, expressions, or surrounding activity. The shifting sunlight, passing crowds, spontaneous gestures, and fleeting interactions become integral parts of the final image. These unpredictable elements shape the emotional tone of the work. A sudden glance, a pause in movement, or a moment of stillness transforms an ordinary scene into something meaningful. Through this process, chance becomes a collaborator, allowing the mundane to reveal itself authentically and without staging.

You focus on workers whose routines shape the rhythm of daily life. Do you see repetition as a stabilising force within the mundane, or as evidence of systemic endurance?

I see it as both. On one hand, these routines are like a heartbeat. The sound of a broom or the sight of a juice seller opening their stall every morning makes the city feel stable and alive. It is what keeps the world moving. On the other hand, it shows a deep kind of strength. When you see the soot on a tea kettle or how heavy a vendor's cart is, you realize this isn't just a habit. It is a tough, physical act of survival that they do every single day. My goal is to show the quiet dignity in that daily grind.

You aim to make “invisible structures” visible. Do you believe photography can genuinely alter how these everyday workers are perceived, or does it risk aestheticising their labour?

As a photographer, I must admit that there is always a chance of making laborious tasks appear "pretty" for the sake of a picture. However, I think photography is capable of more. The majority of individuals don't even look up when they pass a juice stand or someone sweeping. By capturing a picture, I compel the audience to pause and give the subject their full attention. Making their presence indisputable is my aim, not making their struggle appear lovely. My picture of the tea stall or the ice cream cart has served its purpose if it makes someone think of the person behind it for the first time. It is about moving them from the background of the city to the front of the frame.

You emphasise capturing gestures - sweeping, pouring juice, arranging produce. At what point does a simple gesture become narratively charged? What signals that a moment is worth photographing?

A gesture becomes more than just a movement when it starts to feel like a "living signature." Everyone sweeps, but the way that young man leans into his broom tells a story of ownership over his space. I know a moment is worth photographing when a single action bridges the gap between the person and their environment. It's when the soot on the kettle feels like an extension of the tea seller's own hands, or when the laughter of the passengers in a rickshaw balances out the physical strain of the driver. For me, the signal is a sudden "hush" in the chaos. The street is loud and messy, but for a split second, a gesture like a hand arranging produce or someone pausing to look at the sky. That "narrative charge" is the feeling that if I don't click the shutter now, this specific version of human dignity will be lost forever. I'm looking for the moment where the "ordinary" becomes "monumental."

You describe light, crowds, and spontaneous expressions as collaborators. How do you balance patience and readiness when working in such unpredictable public environments?

I think of it like a hunter who doesn't want to hurt anything, I'm just waiting for the right light to hit a specific spot. My patience is in the 'waiting for the stage to be set.' I might find a beautiful tea stall and just stand there for twenty minutes, letting the workers get used to my presence until they forget I'm there. That is the patience part; you have to let the scene breathe. Readiness is the reflex that comes when the 'collaborators' finally show up. I can't control when a stray dog decides to nap by a cart or when the sun breaks through the trees to hit the wet pavement, but I have to be prepared to catch it the second it happens. It's a balance of keeping my feet still but my eyes moving. In these crowded spaces, if you aren't ready to react to a sudden smile or a shifting shadow, the moment is gone before you've even realized it was there. I stay ready so that I can honor the 'gift' the street gives me.

In documenting people at work, particularly in vulnerable or economically precarious contexts, how do you negotiate consent, distance, and dignity? Does chance ever challenge ethical boundaries?

In the real world, the camera is a powerful tool, and I use it with a lot of humility. I don't just 'take' photos; I ask for them. I negotiate consent mostly through eye contact and a smile, sensing if a person is okay with being seen before I even lift the camera. If someone turns away or looks hesitant, I respect that immediately and move on. I never want to 'steal' a photo of someone's struggle - I want to 'share' a moment of their strength. I keep my distance physically to avoid being an obstacle to their hustle, but I stay close emotionally by looking for their dignity. For every shot, I ask myself `Would this person feel proud of this photo?' If the answer is no, I don't take it. To me, a great photograph is a shared moment of trust, not a stolen one. Sometimes, 'chance' does challenge my ethics. A sudden, raw moment of vulnerability might happen right in front of me - something that would make a 'famous' photo but might hurt the person's pride. In those seconds, I have to choose between being a 'photographer' and being a 'human being.' I always choose to be a human being. A person's dignity is always more important than a good shot.

'EVERYTHING? OH, EVERYTHING'
MEDIUM: DIGITAL TEXTILE PRINT

JAMES FREW

@JAMES_FREW_

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

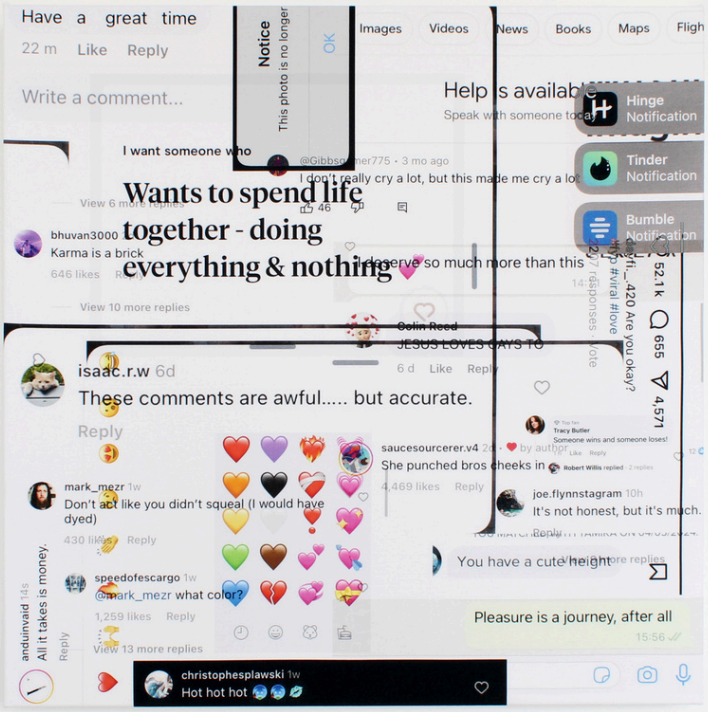
The usage of online text and imagery in my work hints to the contemporary sense of the mundane - 'doomscrolling' and being attached to our devices continuously has created a new, everyday lived experience that encapsulates our post-digital world.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

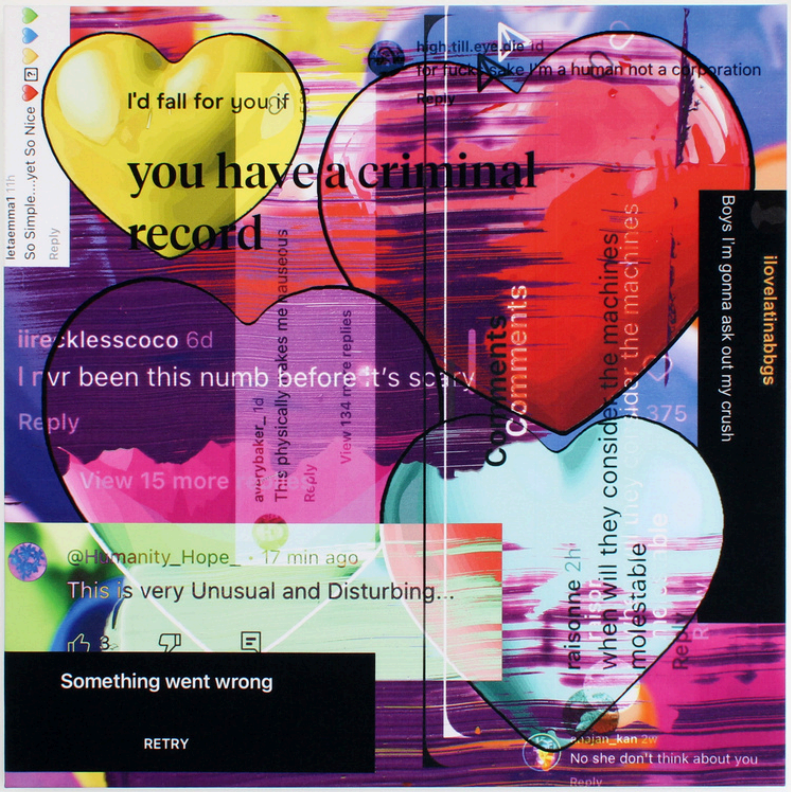
When creating my works I randomly place online found textual imagery in a 'cut-and-paste' digital photomontage process. I have no idea what the work will resemble before I begin - the idea of the work emerges through the process of bringing together disparate images and textual information to create a new narrative which emerges from the making.

You describe doomscrolling and device attachment as a new everyday condition. Do you see the digital feed as today's primary site of the mundane, replacing physical repetition with informational repetition?

I see the digital feed as one of many sites of a mundane everyday condition within a post-digital state, due to its ubiquity and ease of access across many devices. However, the physical encounter can never be replaced - the screen interface extends physicality, and is itself a tactile site for repeated gestures and habits which enables repetitive access to mostly transient information. Interestingly, our captivation with the digital extends beyond the physical idiosyncrasies of the local everyday, to a networked global community of shared behavioural patterns ('doomscrolling', for example).



'HAVE A GREAT TIME (KARMA IS A BRICK)'
MEDIUM: DIGITAL TEXTILE PRINT


I'd fall for you if
you have a criminal record
Something went wrong
RETRY
Boys I'm gonna ask out my crush
ilovelatinabbgs
No she don't think about you

'I'D FALL FOR YOU IF...'
MEDIUM: DIGITAL TEXTILE PRINT

You state that you randomly place online textual imagery without knowing the outcome. How random is this randomness? Are you guided by instinct, aesthetic harmony, or conceptual tension even within the "cut-and-paste" process?

I would say a mixture of all of the above! I start with a vast bank of collected online imagery that I pick and choose from, and bring these together until a theme emerges. Thereafter, I am guided by traditional aesthetic principles, with elements such as composition, colour, shape, and texture often dictating the final image.

You allow narrative to emerge through juxtaposition. At what moment do you recognise that a coherent narrative has formed? Is it discovered or constructed?

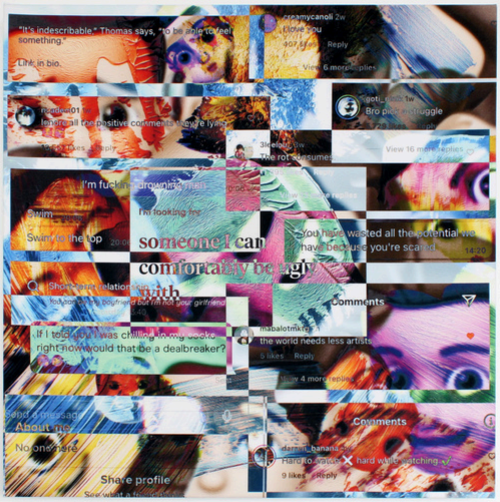
Both. As aforementioned, I let the congregation of images and text dictate what narrative(s) emerges. Once I find a relationship between certain images or words through playful construction, I lock into this and let the work unfold - this can happen early in the process, but sometimes much later into the formation of a composition. I generally like to work quickly so that the work has a raw, almost overwhelmingly fast quality to it; this is a metaphorical mirroring of the online source material that has inspired the work.

The internet itself is algorithmically structured. How does your use of random placement interact with the non-random, data-driven systems that produced the source material?

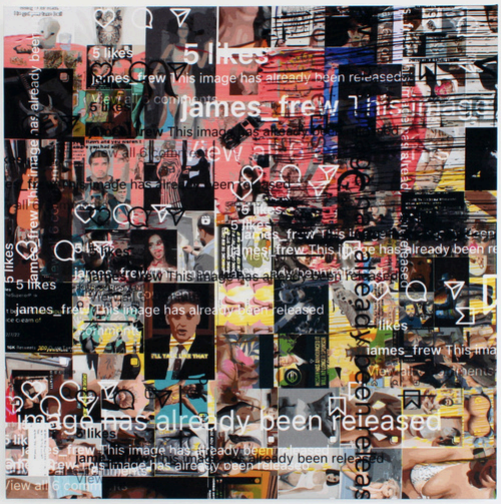
I would say that my randomised placement of source materials acts as an ironic contrast to the algorithmic structures which provided them. However, whilst the systems/platforms that have provided these source materials are defined through structure, the content housed therein can be random, profound, chaotic, and often humorously mundane - for example, blueberry muffin recipes posted in the comments section of pornographic websites!

Your digital photomontages become textile prints. What changes when ephemeral screen imagery is fixed into fabric? Does material permanence counter digital impermanence?

My work is inherently (Marshall) McLuhanian referential in nature, where I draw attention to how an expressive act can be tethered to, or emancipate itself from, its status as a form of medium (unique, analogue objects) and media (networked, digital information). I do not view physical materiality as a counter to digital circulation, rather, they both exist as a kind of spectrum in my work. I enjoy playing with the associations and differences between the discrete, slow nature of the analogue in relation to the fast, mobility of the digital. My works exist in multiple medium/media states simultaneously - online (URL), physical (IRL), and as a blend of both - I call this phenomenon 'Hyperfacture', whereby an artwork exists in circulation with itself. This mode of working questions the nature of what an artwork can be in a post-digital context and how we ascribe authenticity to experience - as such, I am fascinated by the arguable permanence of pigment on canvas working in resistance to, or in harmony with, the transience of the mutable digital encounter. Consequently, by 'fixing' screen imagery onto an analogue canvas construct, I investigate if our interpretation of a work changes based on its medium/media status. I.e., do the histories and discourses of process and material alter our perception of a networked concept? These are the overlapping areas of formal (ex)change I am interested in.



'SOMEONE I CAN COMFORTABLY BE UGLY WITH'
MEDIUM: DIGITAL TEXTILE PRINT



'THIS IMAGE HAS ALREADY BEEN RELEASED'
MEDIUM: DIGITAL TEXTILE PRINT

KATE FALLON-COUSINS

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

My work relates to the mundane because collage is made from the ephemera and the disposable. The words and pictures and products which bombard and surround us. Andy Warhol found beauty in the mundane. The superficial and every day are elevated. The temporary and ordinary become iconic and permanent. Taking the objects of this earthly world and creating a more heavenly or spiritual one.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Collage fits into this theme of chance because it is fresh and spontaneous. The artist does not have a vision in her mind or a plan. She chooses her materials and her themes yes but the best part is the unexpected and the randomness. Every one of my pictures is a complete surprise. It is like a lottery in that it is completely unpredictable. It's not a feeling I always like but it is the nature of the game. I recently found a seven leaf clover not because I'm lucky but because I was looking. Luck is actually look.

You write, “Luck is actually look.” Do you believe chance is something that happens to you, or something you activate through attention?

I am definitely not superstitious and I don't think you can be a lucky or unlucky person but I am a strong believer in making your own look. I found a seven leaf clover because I was the only person looking for it. I think embracing every opportunity and making use of everything you do have makes you more creative. Every artist has adversities and barriers to their success and I think they need an indomitable spirit. I think when you gamble on making Art you are already a winner.

You compare collage to a lottery - unpredictable and not always comfortable. What keeps you committed to a process that feels out of control? Is discomfort necessary for surprise?

I suppose that it is unavoidable. I get the same feeling when I go out shopping for antiques and collectables. Will I find anything? I might go home with nothing or I might find something amazing. These days I am quite confident that if I keep going I will usually make a good collage or find something amazing and these are the things that I love to do the most. There will always be an element of chaos in life and art and I guess you have to try to go with the flow. It definitely is worth it for the element of surprise.

You work with ephemera, products, and imagery that “bombard and surround us.” At what point does something superficial or throwaway become spiritually or symbolically charged?

I once had a dream that I was at a party on Mars and whatever had made us flee to Mars was going to reach us soon. I thought 'what could I leave behind to represent Earth when we were gone' I decided that it didn't really matter what it was. I believe that the spiritual is underlying everything. I think of it like show and tell. I think when you represent things they speak. A crisp packet on its own doesn't say much but when you put it in a picture it speaks. I think these things represent us as a species. Our peculiarities. Our tastes. The things that unite and excite us. I think art communicates in symbols. It shines a light on something and makes you contemplate it.

You describe creating "a more heavenly or spiritual" world from earthly objects. Does chance guide you toward these spiritual symbols, or do you recognise them only after the image forms?

These collages have been spiritual from the very first one of a Madonna and child. I think that my work became kind of religious when I kind of did. Chance has definitely guided me and caused the pictures to go in new directions. The images I use are as random as random can be. I choose things mostly for the shapes. I do choose some things deliberately and symbolically. However they are quite spontaneous and after it is done it can be open to new interpretations.

You say every picture is a complete surprise. At what stage do you decide that the surprise is resolved - that the image is finished rather than still unfolding?

When everything is cut out and fully arranged, that is when I will glue it down. If it is not good enough then I keep tweaking it until it is. I know from experience that if I'm not happy with it I never will be. I don't have a vision of what it will look like when I start so it just has to look finished. Usually it only comes together for certain when I glue it down and the bits of paper stop moving around!

‘THE DIMENSIONS OF [OUR] YELLOW’
MEDIUM: FABRIC

LORRAINE CLEARY

@LORRAINECLEARYSTUDIO

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

My work responds to the mundane by engaging with everyday women's clothing; objects shaped by routine, repetition, and ordinary use. Through reuse and hand processes, garments associated with daily life are slowed down and re-examined, allowing their overlooked details to come into focus. Marks of wear such as stains, stretching, and fading become meaningful rather than disposable, transforming the familiar into something to be closely observed. In this way, the work elevates the ordinary, revealing how quiet histories and habitual gestures can hold emotional and material significance.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

In my work, chance is an active collaborator. I stitch, weave, and reconfigure used women's clothing; materials already shaped by the lives, movements, and histories of their previous wearers. Their worn seams, stretched panels, faint stains, and faded colours introduce unpredictable shifts that guide my hand as much as I guide the needle. Through improvised embroidery and handstitching, I respond to these irregularities, allowing tension, texture, and rhythm to emerge organically rather than through strict planning. The spontaneous interactions between reclaimed fabrics, their past narratives, and my process of repair create pieces that hold both vulnerability and resilience. Each work becomes a negotiation between control and surrender, revealing how unpredictability can be a source of meaning, memory, and quiet transformation. The narrative of the clothing shapes the work unexpectedly; when you upcycle women's garments, the history embedded in each piece of clothing influences the outcome in unplanned ways.

You work with everyday women's clothing marked by stains, stretching, and fading. At what point does wear shift from damage to narrative? How do you decide which traces to preserve and which to transform?

The garments pass through several stages before any stitching begins. The first stage is the sourcing of women's clothes from various charity shops; at this point, I am not necessarily looking for obvious blemishes or damage; instead, I examine the fabric closely, anticipating how it will behave during stitching. I anticipate the difficulties that the chosen fabric may bring to the stitching process or if indeed the fabric would be too unsuitable for the sewing process. Some materials fray excessively or resist stitching, and that physical resistance becomes part of my consideration. Once chosen, the garments are sorted into piles according to colour, and then they are dismantled. Whole garments become fragmented into patches, stripes, and irregular shapes. This act of cutting is both one of destruction and reconstruction. A used garment holds an alternative history, a previous lived experience, and this is something I want to keep within the work; it adds to the work rather than being something that must be erased. Therefore, these areas of wear and tear provide a tangible record of a previous existence that we are not privy to, but these worn elements serve to remind us of that.

'MILK STEALING WITCHES'
MEDIUM: FABRIC & PAINT

'MILK STEALING WITCHES'
MEDIUM: FABRIC & PAINT

You describe chance entering through the lives the garments have already lived. Do you consider the previous wearer a co-author in your work? How conscious are you of their presence during making?

Absolutely, I am very aware that the clothes are pre-worn garments and that these garments hold alternative histories. Take buttons and zips, for instance. During making, I am conscious that these have been opened and closed countless times by the previous owner. Pockets feel particularly intimate as they hold traces of the previous owner who most likely held personal items in them or kept hands warm on a chilly day. Even in their emptiness, they suggest intimacy and concealment. However, while I acknowledge this presence, I do not attempt to reconstruct individual stories. The garments are detached from specific identities. This anonymity shifts the work from the personal to the collective. The previous wearer becomes less an individual and more a representation of shared, everyday female experience.

A stain can become a focal point or something to cover; a tear becomes an opening to stitch through. How do you decide whether to conceal, repair, or highlight these irregularities?

I think the decision ultimately comes down to the aesthetic; if the stain or tear adds to the work and contributes to the narrative, then I will keep it. These marks carry the history of the garment; they hold evidence of use, of touch, and the passage of time. If an imperfection does not sit comfortably within a particular work, I may set that piece of fabric aside. It can be returned to later when that stain, blemish, or tear resonates more clearly with another developing dialogue.

You speak of tension, texture, and rhythm emerging organically rather than through strict planning. Where does your compositional control assert itself within this organic unfolding?

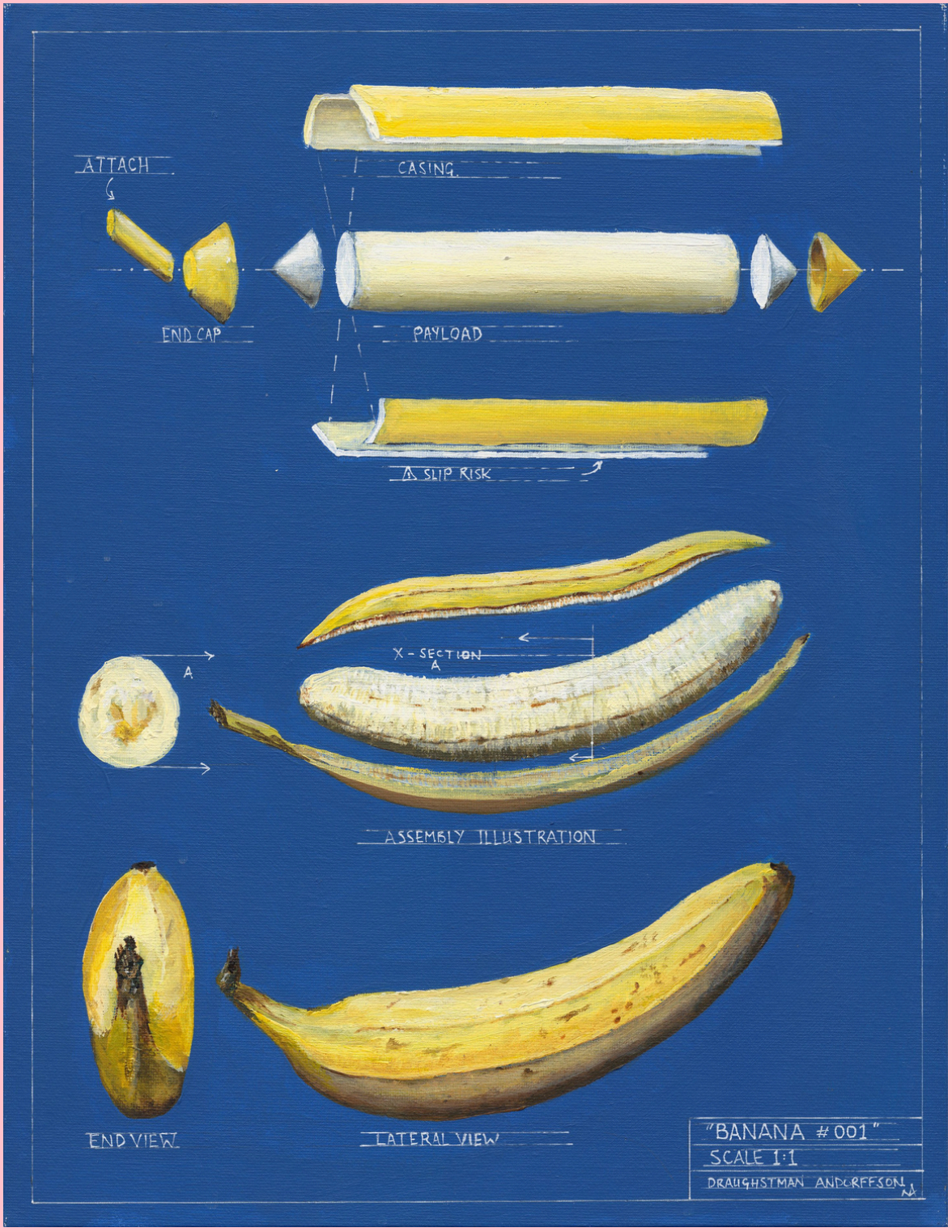
Compositional control asserts itself through the act of making. My approach is intuitive and materially led; however, I do continually assess and make decisions throughout the process. In developing the narrative, I like the material to guide me; tell me its story; therefore, the work is not fully planned beforehand. Choices do, however, need to be made regarding colour, textures, size of fabric pieces, and whether to use strips of fabric or patches or both. I respond to what the material suggests, allowing it to guide the form; in this way, the work evolves organically through dialogue with the fabric, rather than through a fixed, predetermined design.

Because these fabrics weren't designed to be woven, they behave unpredictably (uneven strips, curling edges, shifting tension). Do you work against this resistance, or with it? When does resistance become direction?

There is an extensive preparatory phase prior to the commencement of each work. Materials and fabrics are carefully sourced, gathered, and arranged into piles. At times, depending on the thematic direction, a specific colour or type of fabric must be located before the design process can begin. During this stage, I note what fabrics will be difficult to work with or what fabric will be a pleasure. And yes, some of these fabrics have resisted being woven and stitched. Traditional sewing thimbles have proven to be completely useless. So, at times, instead of a thimble, I use a small piece of timber cut-off to push the needle through the unapologetic fabric or material. In the past, I had a problem with needles snapping in half; therefore, I had to source bigger, thicker, and stronger needles. Resistance, however, is not just an obstacle; it behaves almost as a collaborator, redirecting the work toward outcomes I could not have fully planned in that it forces me to change direction and resolve problems.

'THE DIMENSIONS OF [OUR] YELLOW'
MEDIUM: FABRIC

'CRIMSON SHROUD'
MEDIUM: TEXTILE KNIT



‘BANANA #001’
MEDIUM: ACRYLIC

NEIL ADAMS

@FUSZERKAKOLEKTYW

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

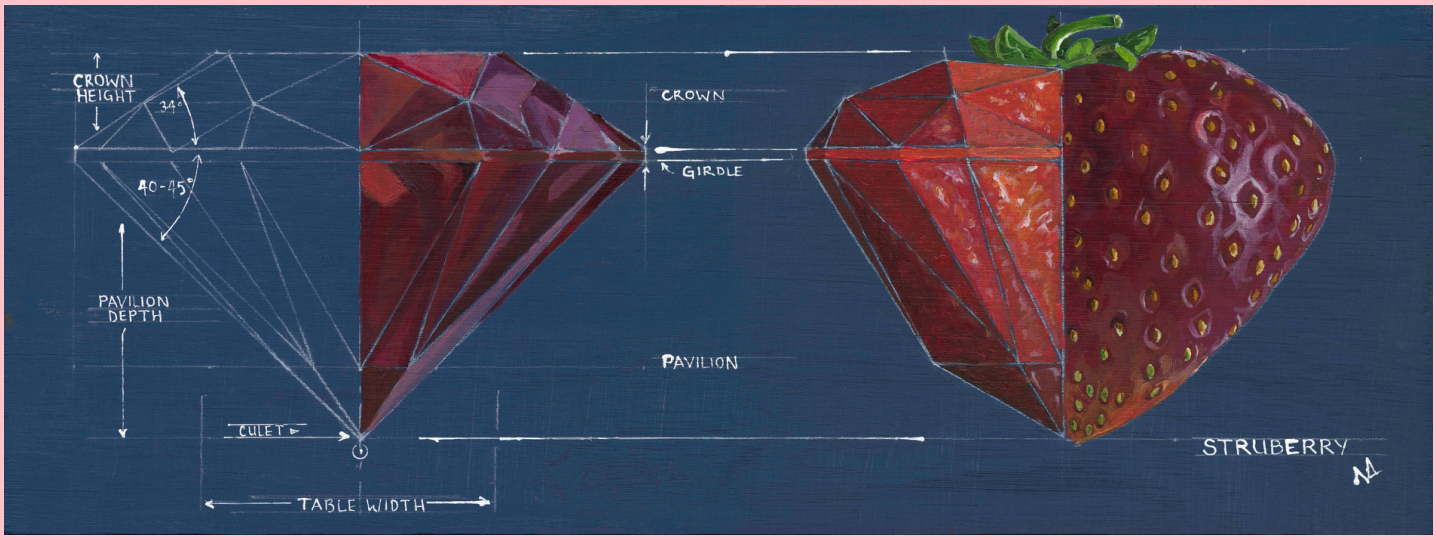
The two pieces explore different ways of seeing still life, often regarded as the most mundane topic for painting. At one level, they're pieces of fruit. By combining the still life with other ways of seeing, the strawberry becomes a cut ruby, the banana, something rather more sinister. The approach draws on my training as an engineer.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Most of the ideas that I have are inspired by coincidences or out of context suggestions. The strawberry is painted on a piece of scrap plywood that my neighbour was throwing out; I wanted to paint something that suggested adding value. Having painted a series of fruit-based paintings, the idea of a strawberry metamorphosing into a ruby occurred as I considered the idea of turning something that was going to be thrown away into something celebrated for beauty.

You describe still life as often considered the most mundane topic in painting. What interests you about reworking a "mundane" genre rather than abandoning it? Is transformation more powerful than reinvention?

I did describe still life as "often considered" the most mundane topic in painting. We're fascinated by other people, and so portraiture, in all its forms, is always a draw, and landscape painting strives to recreate the feelings that we have when awed by nature. By comparison, a bowl of fruit or a wooden stool in a shaft of light may not capture the imagination of the gallery-goer to the same extent. I'm a relative newcomer to the visual arts; I began painting about a year and a half ago, and when my teacher, Tin Stanton, asked me to paint an arrangement of fruit, I wasn't particularly looking forward to the assignment. What I found was that the mundanity of the subject encouraged me to focus on things like form and tone, to really observe, rather than glance and to fill in the blanks from experience and imagination. At that point, in really looking at something, fascination begins to develop. Painting still life involves seeing the subject in a different way to the everyday. To view a piece of fruit, for example, as a collection of shapes, of interactions and juxtapositions of light, shade and colour. The approach that I've taken to the submitted paintings, and others in that series, use different types of abstraction to invite the viewer to see the subject as the artist might and hopefully, to find beauty and interest where it was not previously found. I'm not sure that I see transformation and reinvention as being so very different, I think that they are different aspects of the same thing.



'STRUBERRY'
MEDIUM: ACRYLIC

Your training as an engineer informs the blueprint-style reimagining of fruit. Does technical drawing distance the object from its everyday familiarity, or does it intensify attention to it?

My background is technical, in engineering and science, but my interests have always been very wide-ranging. I always found beauty and elegance in architectural blueprints and in the mathematics that underpin natural and man-made forms. In other paintings in this series, I've accompanied still-life studies of fruit in the process of peeling with the geometric constructions of the spiral and helical forms of the peel. The idea is to invite those who have never seen the beauty in mathematics to appreciate it in this context. Natural forms are often governed by mathematical rules. The "mundane" objects that inhabit your garden or fruit bowl are displays of formulae in action. Expressing traditional still life subjects in this technical way has a couple of aims: to invite the viewer to see this slightly larger world-view, to see the hidden rules that shape the natural world, but also to see the beauty inherent in some manufactured objects and constructions. Nature has a blueprint for an apple just as the engineer does for a suspension bridge. Seeing the numbers behind the patterns, in my opinion, can help in appreciating the beauty. In a sense, I'm trying to both distance the object from its everyday familiarity, whilst asking the viewer to look more carefully.

The strawberry is painted on scrap plywood that was being discarded. How important is the physical support to the conceptual act of “adding value”? Would the idea function differently on pristine canvas?

I think that the idea would function just as well on any substrate. I have a liking for painting on reclaimed, recovered and recycled surfaces whenever I can because I think that if we can reduce consumption, then we should and I don't like seeing things go to waste. For this particular painting, I ran into a neighbour who was throwing out the scrap of plywood (an offcut from fitting an extractor cowl), which happened to be a very similar size and shape to two paintings that I had recently completed. I asked if I might have it for a painting and the idea of the strawberry cut as a ruby partly came from the idea of adding value by turning a piece of scrap wood into a painting. There was a nice parallel there. This is why I chose this painting to submit, as the "chance" element was so prominent. Had I not run into my neighbour at that time, I might not have had that idea - however, I don't think that the concept itself is dependent on the painting surface. I think that there are some interesting ideas to explore around the concept of "added value", though, if I might skip to answering question number 6!

A strawberry becomes a ruby; scrap wood becomes a £600 artwork. Are you questioning how value is assigned, or demonstrating that value is a matter of perspective?

I found this a really worthwhile question to consider. Painting on a piece of discarded wood has an echo of "one man's trash is another man's treasure". What one person throws away can be not just a valuable resource to another, but also perhaps a source of inspiration. I hope that painting on reclaimed and recycled surfaces when I can provides an invitation to consider disparities in wealth and provision. I've seen people disposing of cheap, mass-produced art prints via skips and tips, and even recovered some so that I could paint on them. In a sense the value of a piece of artwork is always a personal thing; whether it's financial or in terms of what the artist gets out of producing the artwork. Let's face it, the overwhelming majority of paintings completed on any given day are destined not to sell. Their value is not monetary, but spiritual. They contribute to an artist's skill, or to maintaining wellbeing, they may help to foster community, or be given as a gift to show love. The act of creation for its own sake has value, especially if we compare it to the alternative. If we focus on monetary value we enter a whole other set of potentially fascinating debates. My art teacher encourages us not to price artwork too low. Part of me feels that I'd like to just give every painting away, if it's going to be truly appreciated. What makes Van Gogh's sunflowers worth their purported ninety million? What makes a person part with any amount of money for a painting? I find it very odd that if my "struberry" painting was by a celebrity, its market value would be far higher. Would it not be exactly the same painting, asking exactly the same questions, if it were by Sir Elton John, or Helen Mirren, or someone I'd never heard of but who has ten million TikTok followers? I am an amateur artist, and I recognise that I am privileged in this respect. It doesn't really matter if my paintings sell or not but that in itself raises an interesting question. If I price a painting by approximating the hours that I put into it and applying my salary to those hours, if I got a better job, should I increase the price of my paintings? So, yes, absolutely, the subject of this particular painting invites the viewer to consider these questions. Which is more valuable, the fruit or the gemstone? You get a different answer from a jeweller and a man starving on a remote island. If rubies disappeared from the world, arguably, only those with investments in gemstones would suffer, but if we lost strawberries, the loss would, I think, be more widely and keenly felt. Our modern world lays waste to nature whilst prizing baubles. Diamonds may be forever, but they won't keep you from getting scurvy. Who is to say what my painting is worth? I'd certainly be grateful to receive six hundred quid for it! However, if I may take just a second to self-publicise, should any of your readers consider that a bit steep, I'd happily offer a limited-edition print.

Blueprint drawing implies precision and control, yet your ideas originate in coincidence. How do you reconcile disciplined technical execution with the randomness of inspiration?

I'm really glad to be asked about the reconciliation of disciplined technical execution and the randomness of inspiration, because I think that there's a really important point to offer here. There's a widespread misconception that a person is either "arty" or not. That we're either "creative" or "straight-line thinkers". That creation, whether it be painting, music, literature, or anything else, can only be done by the few that fate has selected for inspiration. I firmly believe that this is bullshit. Firstly, practice and discipline are what enable you to develop the skill to execute ideas. No one picks up a violin for the first time and improvises a tune that moves the listener to tears. Not of joy, anyway. The ability to make the most of fleeting moments of inspiration comes from dedication to practice, seeking instruction, learning from mistakes. Secondly, dedication to a practice produces its own inspiration. In really stopping to learn about the processes that go into your art form, each individual will come to understand those processes in their own, unique ways. The more you learn about a thing, the more sources of inspiration you are exposed to. Yes, of course, life throws us chance encounters that may provide those fleeting inspirations, but the more immersed we are in our art, the more likely we are to recognise and act upon them. I only recently started painting, but I've been making music as an amateur for years, and have many friends who are musicians, and it's really notable that the people who get the most original ideas are pretty much always the ones who dedicate themselves to learning new things, to practice, collaboration and experimentation. I think with any art form, what makes those very special pieces is when that inspiration and that discipline combine.

RICHARD EVELEIGH

@RICHARDEVELEIGHARTIST

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

The central theme of my art is 'duality.' In these examples (all from 2024), my theme overlaps with the mundane. The bleak scene of cobwebs in the garden is very much mundane, but also intriguing and beautiful in its strangeness.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Capturing the frozen webs was very much achieved by chance. Before the mist descended and the frost set in, the webs were invisible in the garden. It is only by chance that this overlooked scene could be observed.

You describe duality as central to your practice. How does the frozen cobweb embody duality - fragility and structure, decay and beauty, visibility and invisibility?

Spider webs are intrinsically contradictory forms. They possess remarkable tensile strength, yet remain nearly invisible and easily disturbed. Frost unsettles this balance. The accumulation of ice renders the web visible, while the freezing temperatures immobilise its once-elastic structure. Stripped of its function as a trap, it hangs suspended in a state of arrested purpose. In this condition, the web exists between vitality and obsolescence. What was once an active instrument of survival becomes a fragile relic. The frost does not simply decorate the structure; it reveals another aspect of it. There is beauty in this exposure, but also an undercurrent of absence — the spider has withdrawn, leaving behind a silent, intricate trace of its labour. The frozen web therefore embodies duality on multiple levels: strength and vulnerability, visibility and concealment, presence and withdrawal. Frost makes tangible the tension that has always defined the web, allowing fragility and resilience to coexist within the same delicate form.

The webs were invisible before the mist and frost. Do you see chance as a temporary unveiling of what is always present, or as a transformation that creates something new?

The webs exist whether we perceive them or not, yet they remain largely unnoticed because of their near invisibility. I therefore see frost not as a transformation that creates something new, but as an unveiling of what is already present. Its intervention is temporary; the visibility it confers is fleeting. In this sense, chance becomes a brief suspension of our habitual ways of seeing. It interrupts visual indifference and grants access to a structure that has always existed but has rarely been acknowledged. The frost does not invent the web — it merely reveals it. I feel my photographic practice operates in a similar manner. It does not seek to manufacture meaning, but instead captures a brief moment in time. The camera becomes a device extending the life of that temporary unveiling so that we may look more closely, and perhaps recognise what was always there.

Frost and mist make the unseen visible. Do you consider weather an active co-author in your work? How much of your process is anticipation versus fortunate timing?

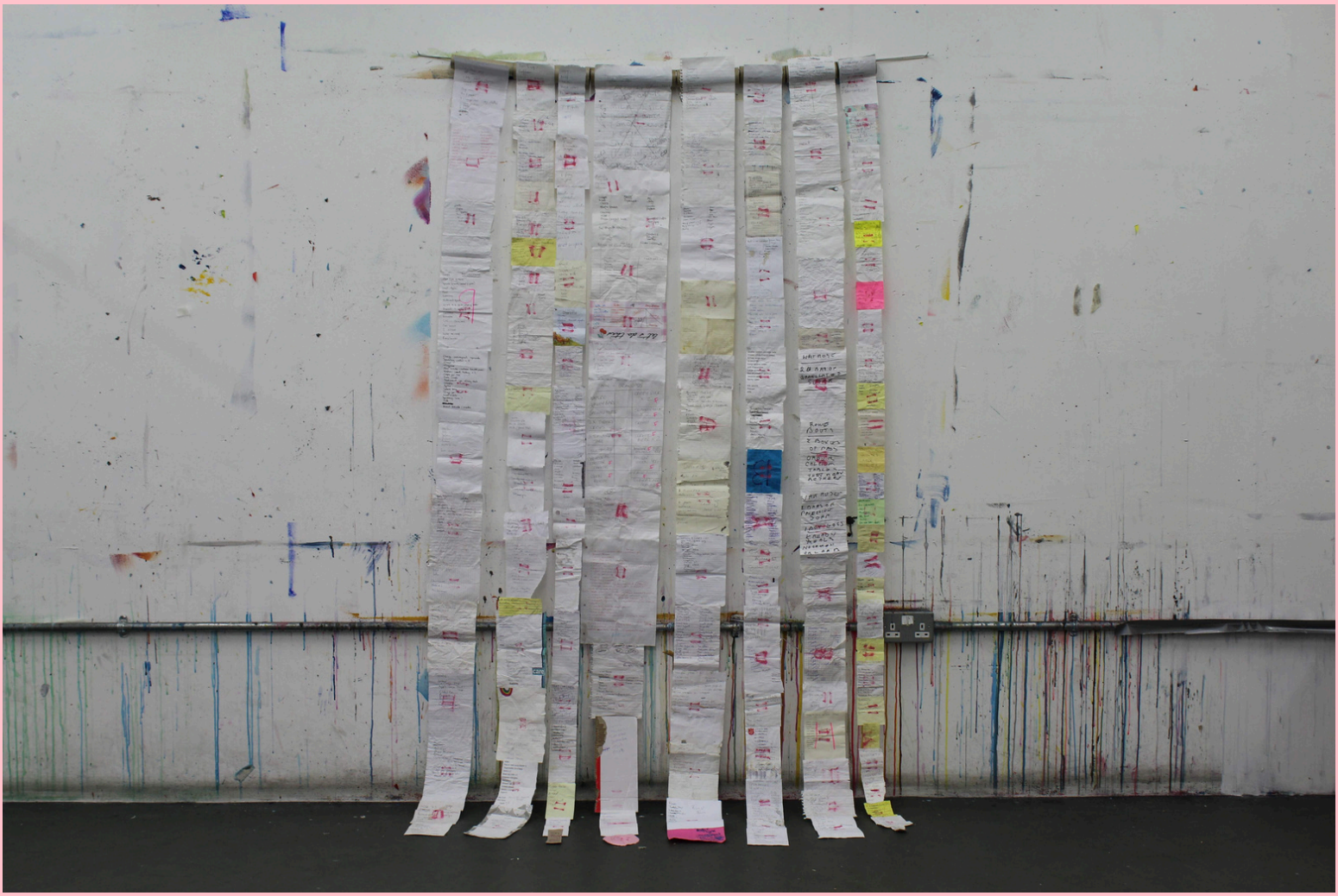
Much of my work begins spontaneously. I am often simply out walking when something catches my attention — a shift in light, a low mist, frost glinting in the sun. There is a sense of being in the right place at the right time. Yet because I live in the countryside and repeatedly walk the same routes, the encounter is never entirely accidental. Beneath the spontaneity lies a quiet anticipation — an openness to the possibility that something ordinary may briefly become extraordinary. I cannot control the weather, so it is undeniably a co-author. Its volatility shapes both the visibility and the character of the landscape, determining not only what can be seen, but how it appears. My role is to recognise and explore these changing conditions. There is a collaboration between intention and contingency. I bring attention, framing and stillness; nature brings unpredictability. That unpredictability introduces a vitality I could never fabricate. It is precisely this tension — between anticipation and fortunate timing, control and chaos — that gives the work its drive.

A garden is an intensely familiar, domestic environment. What makes this everyday setting fertile ground for moments of strangeness?

I think it is precisely the garden's familiarity that makes it fertile ground for strangeness. Because it is so everyday, it becomes visually neutral — a space we pass through without truly observing. We assume we already know it. In England especially, the word "garden" conjures images of tended lawns and decorative borders — something orderly, picturesque and reassuring. Yet these managed spaces remain part of the natural world, never entirely subject to our control. When frost settles over them, that illusion of stability falters. Few people sit in their gardens sipping lemonade in freezing conditions, so the seasonal shift unsettles the domestic narrative we attach to the space. As the weather changes, the winter garden takes on another identity. What is usually soft and decorative becomes stark and architectural. That subtle dissonance interests me. It reveals that even the most familiar environments contain latent strangeness, waiting for the right conditions to surface.

Frost melts; mist lifts. Does the knowledge that the scene is fleeting affect how you photograph it? Is there pressure in capturing what may disappear within minutes?

The pressure of the ticking clock is always present when working with a transient subject, and this series was no exception. Weather is changeable to the point of volatility; a scene can dissolve within seconds. That awareness sharpened my attention. Decisions became instinctive rather than deliberated. There wasn't the luxury of overthinking — only responsiveness. In the garden series, the urgency was intensified not only by the thawing landscape, but by my own physical limitations in the cold. Due to ongoing medical conditions, sub-zero temperatures are difficult for me to tolerate. I was therefore working within a very narrow window. Even heavily layered, my hands numbed quickly, and the icy paths made movement precarious. The environment imposed boundaries that I could not ignore. This constraint introduced another layer of duality. While I was drawn toward the landscape with curiosity and desire, my body was simultaneously resisting it. There was a quiet tension between endurance and retreat, engagement and self-preservation. That echoed the fragility within the images themselves. The pressure didn't feel purely stressful, but integral to the process. Knowing the frost would melt — and my capacity to remain present would also diminish — heightened my sensitivity to the scene. It demanded an increased alertness that slower, more controlled conditions rarely require. The fleeting nature of the moment did not undermine the work; it gave it intensity.



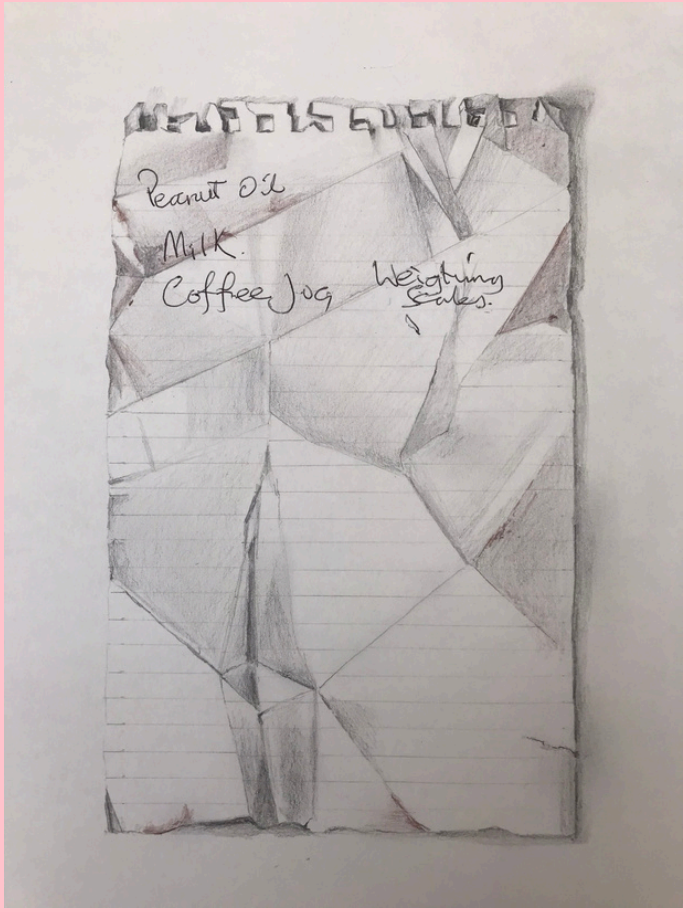
‘TO DO’
MEDIUM: INSTALLATION

ROBERT VERRILL

@VERRILLROBERT

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

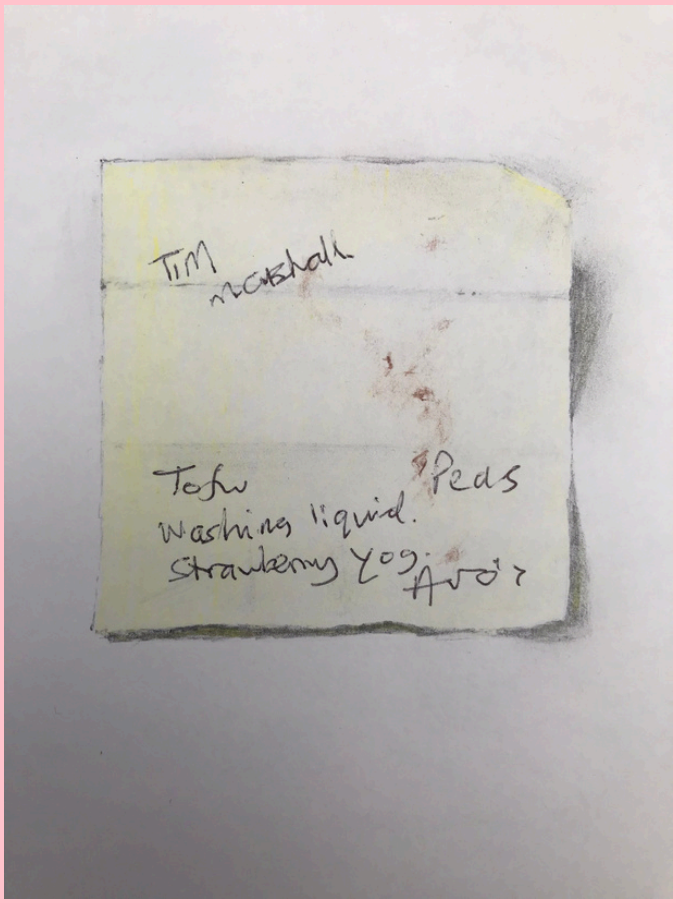
By reference to the common language represented by mundane everyday objects I can hopefully reach more people. The best stories reside in the mundane; nowhere more so than hidden or implied in (accidentally discovered) discarded shopping lists. Shopping lists are one of the few places that many people write by hand today. They therefore convey much about the modern human condition. In recent years I have made sculpture and installations from polystyrene fishboxes, metal/plastic clothes driers, plastic cereal packets, staples and a fast-food delivery driver's pannier. As well as showing actual shopping lists and drawings of lists (as submitted here). All are redolent with references to our complex world. The ontological aura that surrounds such commonplace things enables a richness of associations. From environmental issues around consumption and waste to our indifference to the incredible design and sophistication of ordinary product packaging, the ordinary can say an extraordinary amount.



'PEANUT OIL'
MEDIUM: DRAWING

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance and the mundane go hand in hand throughout my work. They are both central to my work as they enliven by creating unexpected juxtapositions. Chance does something that cannot be achieved by relying purely on what comes out of our everyday, familiar minds. Chance lets in the unimaginable, unconsidered (or discounted or dismissed), unexpected, unfamiliar and uncomfortable to disrupt, transform and elevate our work in a way that could not otherwise happen. Or equally to mess it up. Mundane found objects, found by chance (I never go out looking to find) such as other people's discarded or lost shopping lists found by chance, appear extraordinary, poignant, personal, baffling and often sad or funny or both. They are intensely human and yet so readily jettisoned, apparently, after use. They are totally relatable and yet other-worldly, prying glimpses into other lives.



'TOFU'
MEDIUM: DRAWING

You emphasise that you never go out looking for shopping lists - they are found by chance. How important is this non-seeking to the integrity of the work? Would intentional collecting change its meaning?

Although I never go out consciously looking for something to find that might be useful for my artwork, I am subconsciously always open and receptive to noticing what's around me, and if that yields something that I can manage to get home, I try and gather it up. It is very important that I keep an open mind on what might attract my attention in order to keep widening my terms of reference to as many aspects of our society as possible. Chance finds continually refresh my work and allow in new thoughts and possibilities and help to shake up preconceived ideas and modes of thinking and working. Though we probably like to believe that we are in control of our lives, in fact, chance plays a huge role in shaping our journeys through the world and hence our lives. Marcel Duchamp mischievously poked fun at the supposed certainty and immutability of scientific notions such as units of measurement. He changed the length of a metre by dropping three metre-long strings from a metre height and fixing them in the chance, random curved shapes they landed. Then he claimed they were equally valid as new measurements for a metre, our accepted notion of a metre being randomly derived from the distance between the North Pole and the equator – itself not an entirely fixed distance. Arguably, a more truly chance and unintentional way of finding objects would be to create a very rigid system for finding and collecting discarded items and picking things up by applying this system to the completely unrelated way in which objects are dropped/discarded/thrown away around us. In fact, a few years ago, I made up and used such a system for a while to see what would happen. The rule ran something like: "Walk for an hour in a northerly direction, stopping every 5 minutes to pick up the nearest loose object lying near you on the floor. Then change direction to walk at 90 degrees to the right for an hour and repeat the 5-minute collections. Repeat twice more to return home, having recorded each find and put them in a bag. Then lay out the finds in order of collection and ponder what this tells us about time, chance, and your relationship to the world." Additionally, I considered collecting/recording other data at each stop, such as a short description of the nearest other person or animal, a description of the site, any sound I could hear, and the first thought that occurred to me at that moment. I found the temptation was to rationalize the objects into being linked by a shared narrative, which of course did not exist. But that did not mean the linkages between the objects were not important or significant to us. Chance finds/actions often have great importance to us, e.g., meeting a friend or partner by chance for the first time, finding a crucial book in a charity shop, or stepping out into the road suddenly without thinking! Though a form of intentional collecting, this would actually give a more random chance collection of items. I did carry out this methodology, which gave much food for thought, but perhaps I should take it up as a regular art project and consider how I could present it. Somehow online, I suppose, but I don't have the technical ability to sort that out. Perhaps I need to collaborate with someone who could put it online.

Shopping lists are one of the few remaining handwritten documents in daily life. What does handwriting add to your understanding of the mundane? Is it evidence of individuality within mass consumption?

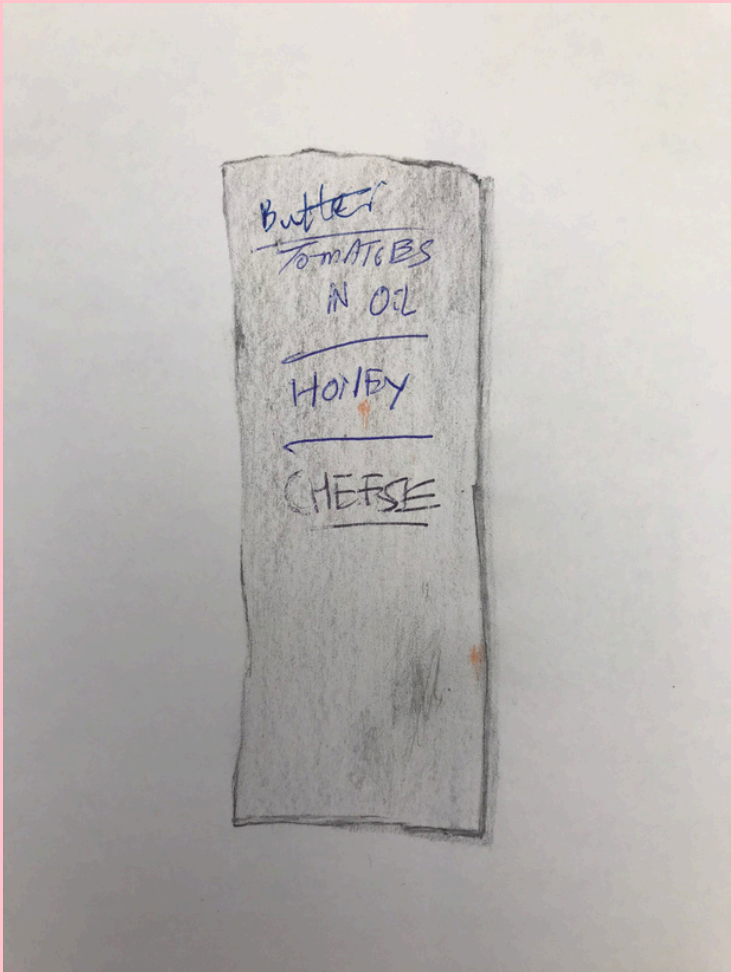
Mundane means "earthly" or "worldly," which was taken to imply something ordinary or banal. Being handwritten, or handmade in any way, in my view, absolutely elevates something as worldly or prosaic as a shopping list to something unique, individual, and redolent with character and personality, the more so because it transmits our character unwittingly. This only serves to emphasise the mundanity of the mostly industrially and mass-produced products that feature on these lists. Handwriting is very much evidence of individuality within mass consumption. It contains our life story to that point and indicates social status and wealth.

Lists contain banal items - milk, bananas, toilet roll - yet feel intensely personal. At what point does a list shift from functional note to portrait of a life?

A shopping list, and particularly a handwritten one, becomes a personal portrait with its first word whilst remaining a functional note at the same time. We are what we eat. Our lists can, to some extent, tell others what we probably look like, how old we are, our sex/gender, our lifestyle, politics, and view of life, etc. We should be careful what we throw away or drop accidentally!

You describe shopping and consumption as the new "religion." Is your work a critique of this ritual, a documentation of it, or a reluctant acknowledgement of its centrality?

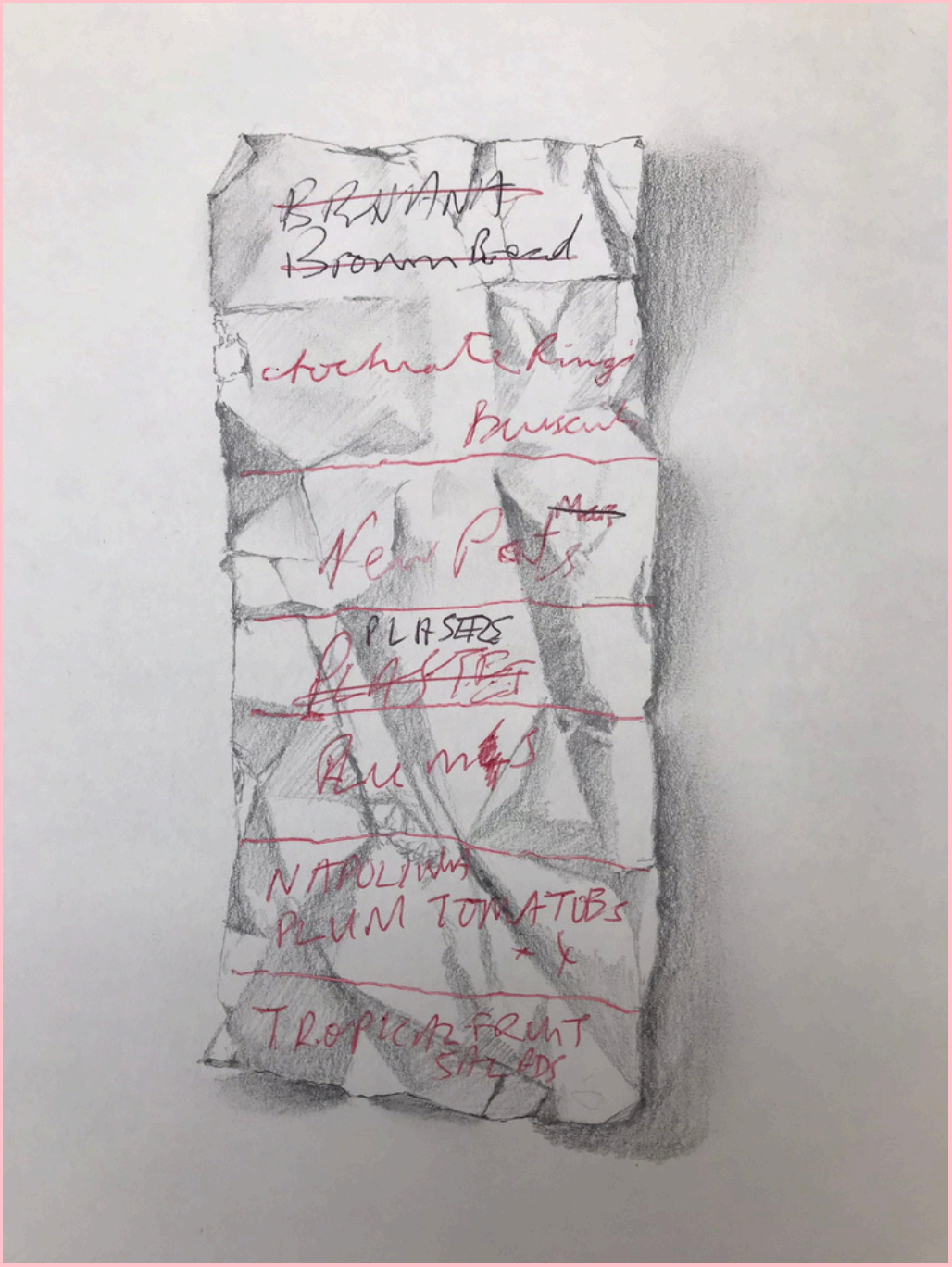
Yes, I think much of my work has been a critique of our increasingly consumerist and acquisitive society in inverse proportion to the waning centrality of organized religion, particularly so with the growth of online retailing activity which consumes so much of people's lives. In large parts of the world, we don't now look to religion to make sense of our lives and impart meaning, but rather we try to find reasons to exist and validate our existence through conspicuous consumption. I suppose that to some extent I also record or document, although I do not do this scientifically or empirically as the term documentation might suggest. I am certainly aware of its centrality in our modern culture.



'**BUTTER**'
MEDIUM: DRAWING

You state that chance creates unexpected juxtapositions. Is the disruption located in the content of the list itself, or in the context of displaying it as art?

Admitting chance through putting random finds together certainly creates unexpected and sometimes very revealing and powerful juxtapositions, transformations of perception and relationships. John Stezaker makes very uncomplicated collages or photo-montages by careful editing and collision of found photographs of unknown people with landscapes or city views to create often extremely powerful psychological works. These play with our reading of common features in the human form and the landscape. Random and otherwise unconnected items often appear next to each other on found shopping lists. These can be amusing as well as indicative of the writer's (or their family's) characteristics. The very act of displaying such lists elevates their status and value and requires us, who produce the lists, to reflect on what we create but don't fully see and consider.



'BROWN BREAD'
MEDIUM: DRAWING

‘SUNDAY ISTANBULLERS OVER THE GOLDEN HORN’
MEDIUM: PAINTING

SEAN BW PARKER

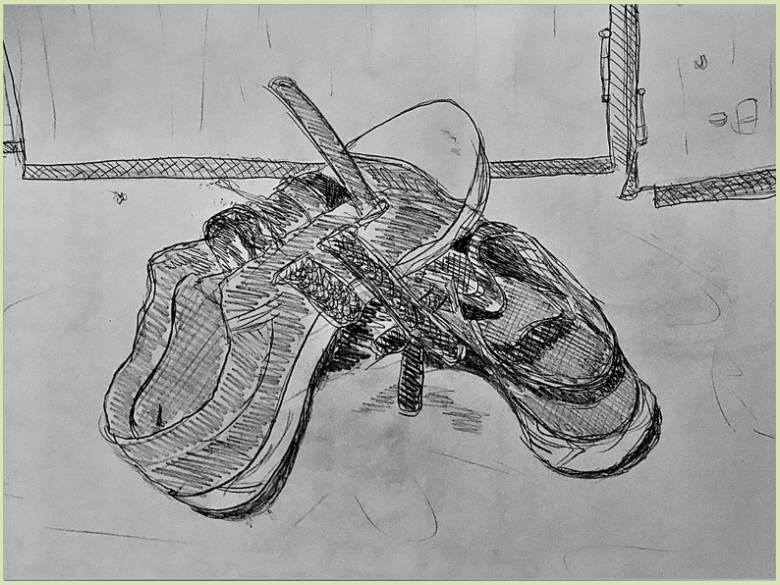
@SEANBWPARKER7

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

They are paintings of aspects of 'everyday life', if in my own style.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance, serendipity and spontaneity are big aspects of my practice. Here is my artistic statement to explain more: While I'm happy to write about other people's creative work, writing about my own feels somehow disingenuous, whether that's about painting or music. It's so much more interesting when the viewer gives you their own interpretation. That said, the cultural milieu influences my portraits, the paint itself influences my abstracts, and it's all at its best when I bring them together successfully - though success is a famously subjective term in art. I love the process of painting, and that having its own communicative style, rather than trying to find words to describe it. I try to add whatever is happening in the present moment to 'the world of art', in my own style. My work in painting (and poetry) tends to be: 'Make, then see what I've made' – concept follows production, via the subconscious - and my new motto is: If it doesn't look like it could have been made by AI, then it's 'successful' enough.



'PRISON TRAINERS'

'DEAD SPARROW AT DFS'
MEDIUM: PAINTING

You describe your method as "Make, then see what I've made." What shifts internally when you move from production to interpretation? Does meaning feel discovered, imposed, or revealed?

When I say "Make, then see what I've made" I don't mean it's a totally blind, random process. I'll often start out with a general concept or work from a photograph, but tend to soon start working away from them as the process takes over. So the meaning might be in there as a germ, and the process has covered it over, mystified it somewhat, and I enjoy that process, I don't like things to be too straightforward. When the production feels 'finished', I'll just live with it for a while, until I'm seeing it more as a new observer would. Then, I guess, it's revealed.

You suggest concept follows production via the subconscious. Do you consider the subconscious a form of internal chance? How much do you trust it?

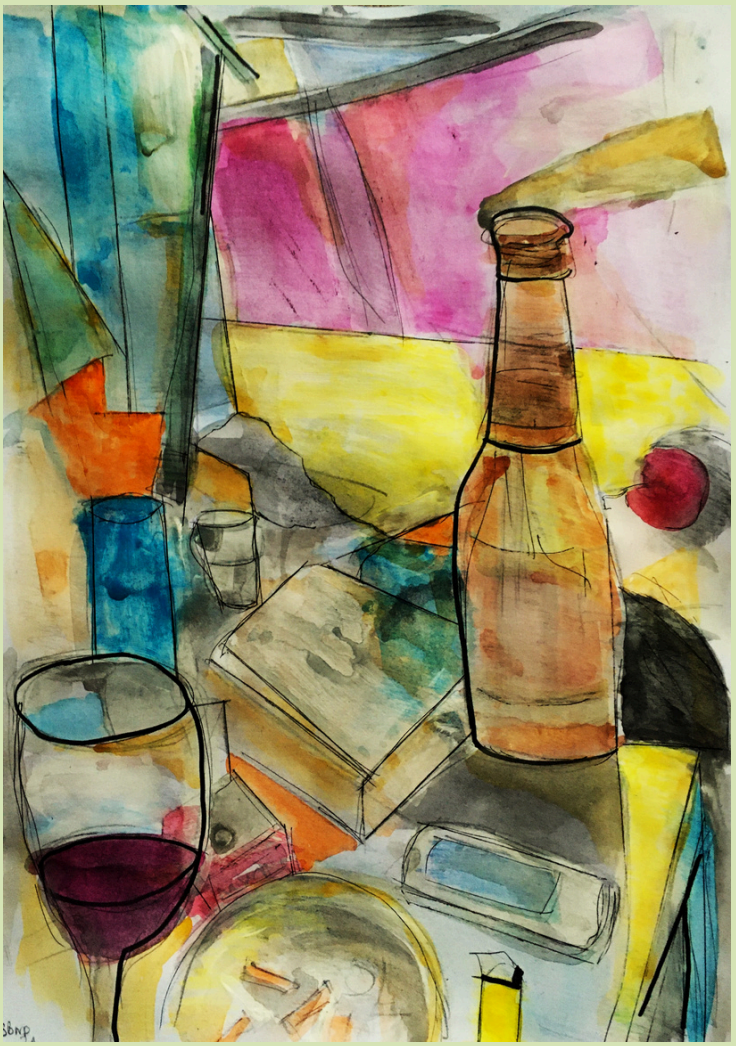
I wouldn't trust the subconscious in making practical decisions about life, that's more a process of thinking about consequences and balancing with intuition. But I find the work of Sigmund Freud, and its impact on Salvador Dali for one, compelling, as unpopular as that might nowadays be. He observed patterns in different people's dreams leading to similar effects in their conscious lives. That feels like the unfolding of some grand life mystery. I'd say the subconscious is less internal chance than a mental dishwasher for the practicalities of the day. Its unpredictability is beautiful, and a perfect foil for the utilitarianism of the modern world.

You paint aspects of everyday life, but distinctly filtered. Does your style disrupt the mundanity of the subject, or does it intensify it?

I've been a big fan of mundanity since I was a small boy, probably due to the influence of Thomas Hardy, not to mention EastEnders. When a writer can turn a minute observation into deep pathos or ripping humour by a phrase relating to the mundanities of life, it's the form at its best, to me. One of the best things about being born British is a tacit celebration of the mundane, the beauty in small, ignored, everyday things. That can be an object, a gesture, an inflection of an accent, an attitude. I like to think my painting style, whatever it is, encourages the observer to see that mundane thing in a new way.

You note that cultural context influences your portraits. Is this influence conscious and deliberate, or does it seep in unpredictably through process?

I've had to face the fact that I enjoy the news, the cultural milieu, the world and how it works. But having a capacity for critical thinking, I balance that enthusiasm with analysis. I was writing 'seriously' about culture, specifically music, before I started to get serious about painting, and I have a compulsion to bring my forms of expression together as best I can. The albums are similar: as a young man I wrote a lot about doomed love, nowadays it's about the effects of the media-justice system on individual lives. I actually try to reduce any obvious cultural context with the process of painting, so that the observer isn't sure if they're looking at a stylised painting or a piece of socio-political situationism. I'm comfortable with that ambiguity, and I hope the viewer is too.



'STILL LIFE WITH BOTTLE AND GLASS'
MEDIUM: PAINTING

You state that "the paint itself influences my abstracts." At what point does the material begin to dictate direction? Do you ever feel overridden by the medium?

This question refers to the core of what I do. One of my favourite aspects of Modernism was 'truth to materials', to treat the paint and the canvas as what they are, and not to pretend you're imitating reality. So while trying to keep to this principle of materials, I also, increasingly, try to include a sense of narrative, to include my other cultural interests. I prize the paint as having its own voice, and it not being my job to clean it up or control it too much. I would love to be overridden by the medium more often, as I think my work is most successful then, but somehow the story always pokes through, particularly in the view of the observer. I find they prefer relatable stories to analyses of painting styles!

'THIS IS NOT A VAPE PEN'
MEDIUM: PAINTING

‘AFRICAN MASK - ASSEMBLAGE’
MEDIUM: MIXED MEDIA ASSEMBLAGE

SHAHAR TUCHNER

@SHAHARTUCHNERT

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

My work responds to the mundane by reconfiguring everyday objects into structures that feel symbolic, unstable, or ritualistic. I am interested in how repetition, maintenance, and overlooked materials carry emotional and social weight. By shifting ordinary items out of their expected function, I allow the familiar to become strange, revealing the hidden tension embedded within daily life.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

Chance plays a central role in my process through intuitive assembly and recombination. Rather than beginning with a fixed design, I often allow form to emerge from stacking, balancing, and rearranging found elements. The final structure is shaped by material encounters, gravity, instability, and unexpected relationships between objects. In this way, chance becomes both method and collaborator.

'RABOTA! (PERSIL TOWER)'
MEDIUM: MANIPULATED READYMADE / MIXED MEDIA ASSEMBLAGE

In Maintenance of Meaning, repetition accumulates into sediment. At what point does repetition stop being invisible routine and become form? Is visibility the result of duration or disruption?

Repetition becomes form when it begins to leave a trace - not only on the surface of objects, but within the body and the mind. At first, routine is invisible precisely because it functions. It maintains order without demanding attention. But repetition is never neutral. It accumulates. It gathers weight. It becomes a quiet architecture. For me, visibility emerges through two parallel processes. One is physical: the act itself, repeated again and again - wipe, rinse, stack, return - until time thickens into something almost material, like sediment collecting at the bottom of a river. The other is mental: intention. The decision to look at the act differently, to treat the gesture as something worth holding, shaping, and questioning. It is the consciousness before, during, and after the act that transforms maintenance into art. So the mundane becomes visible not only through duration, but through a subtle disruption - a slight misalignment, a shift in rhythm, a moment when the body hesitates. That hesitation is where meaning begins. It is as if repetition suddenly reveals its hidden tension, and what was once automatic becomes charged. Ultimately, the boundary between routine and form is not defined only by time or accident, but by an inner recognition - a spark, a pressure, a moment of internal illumination that says: this is no longer only function. This is something else. That inner ignition becomes a compass. When it happens, I trust it, and I follow it, like the first domino that falls and sets an entire structure into motion. In Maintenance of Meaning, repetition is not simply a loop. It is a pressure. It is time made physical. What begins as routine gradually becomes a structure - and that structure eventually becomes impossible to ignore.

You describe moments where "a bucket tilts differently" and something shifts. How do you recognise when a small imbalance has crossed into meaning?

I recognise meaning at the moment when the ordinary refuses to remain background. A bucket tilting differently is a small event, almost insignificant, yet it can contain a complete shift in perception. Suddenly the world feels slightly unstable, slightly absurd, or strangely alive. The artist, I believe, must develop something close to a detective's instinct. Beyond being a maker, thinker, or researcher, the artist must cultivate a heightened sensitivity - a sharpened sense of noticing. I imagine it almost like a detective quietly observing a scene, magnifying glass in hand, attentive to the smallest detail. Nothing dramatic announces itself. The shift is subtle. The role is not to force meaning, but to recognise it when it appears. That recognition can arrive in many forms: a tension in the body, a sudden humor, a quiet unease, an unexpected beauty, a brief suspension of breath. Sometimes it is only a slight internal spark - a feeling that something has moved out of its functional position and entered another space. In that instant, the object is no longer merely practical. It begins to resonate. It feels almost like catching something in the act - a quiet "ah" moment. A small deviation becomes charged. The imbalance is no longer accidental; it reveals a hidden structure. The mundane is full of these thresholds. A minor shift becomes a rupture. And suddenly the object is not just an object – it becomes a witness, a metaphor, or a silent presence. Meaning emerges not because the event is large, but because perception sharpens. The inner awareness responds to the physical moment, and something aligns. What was once unnoticed becomes inevitable.

In Rabota! (Persil Tower), cleaning tools become monumental and oppressive. Do you see maintenance labour as inherently ritualistic, or does it become ritual only through artistic framing?

For me, maintenance labour becomes ritual because it is existentially imposed. It is not something we choose in a poetic sense; it is something life requires. The moment an action repeats from one day to the next, it becomes routine - and routine, at its core, is a form of ritual. Not religious, but structural. It shapes the day. It shapes the body. It shapes time. Cleaning, repairing, sustaining - these gestures are unavoidable. They form the base layer of human existence. Because they must be done, they accumulate weight. Over time, repetition becomes choreography, and choreography becomes a kind of lived ritual. In everyday life, however, maintenance is rarely acknowledged as meaningful. It is reduced to function. Its invisibility becomes part of its burden. In Rabota! (Persil Tower), the tools become monumental not to glorify labour, but to expose that burden. Maintenance becomes oppressive when it is endless, unseen, and required without recognition. Art does not invent ritual. It reveals the structure that was already there. By shifting scale and context, the work allows the viewer to see maintenance not as background, but as a condition of existence – a quiet system that sustains life while simultaneously wearing it down.

'BBQ BICYCLE'
MEDIUM: STEEL, FOUND OBJECTS, MIXED MEDIA SCULPTURE

You build through stacking, balancing, and rearranging. Is instability something you aim to control, or do you seek a point where the structure feels genuinely precarious?

I'm drawn to the tension between stability and instability. That tension is not merely structural - it is the pulse of the work. I'm not interested in instability as a superficial gesture, but in tension that generates meaning. What interests me is a charged equilibrium - a structure that feels alive because it holds opposing forces at once. The process often begins as an instinct, something almost subconscious - a desire to see a certain kind of tension in space. As I work, that instinct becomes conscious decision-making: I stack, adjust, test, and rearrange, entering into dialogue with gravity, weight, and material resistance. The sculpture must hold. It needs to remain physically stable. Yet at the same time, I trust the structure and allow it to speak back. I give the work space to reveal what it wants to become. If a composition feels too stable, I introduce imbalance. If it becomes too chaotic, I search for anchoring. I remain in constant negotiation between these forces until the work feels complete. I'm not seeking fragility for its own sake, but the creation of a new configuration - a recombination of familiar objects into something strange, compelling, and meaningful. It is within that balanced tension that new interpretation becomes possible. For me, this balance is not only an aesthetic choice. It becomes a way of generating meaning. The instability creates a subtle emotional tremor - something that unsettles the heart even when the structure appears stable. Even when nothing actually falls, an inner tension can emerge, as if something might shift at any moment. And once the work stands before a viewer, the same movement can occur: the object enters perception, touches something beneath language, rises into awareness, and begins to reshape interpretation. In that sense, the structure becomes a trigger - not a fixed message, but a condition that activates thought and feeling, inviting the viewer into their own internal shift.

In African Mask – Assemblage, a face emerges from leftovers. Do you believe identity is something assembled through chance encounters, rather than pre-designed?

Yes, I do believe identity is assembled. Of course there is a foundation - our DNA, our temperament, the basic inner structure we are born with. But from the moment we enter the world, we are shaped by forces far beyond our control: family, environment, the people we meet, the places we live, and the circumstances we are born into. Identity is not something I experience as a clean design or a fixed plan. It is formed through accumulation - fragments, encounters, pressures, losses, successes, memories, and small moments that remain in the body. In a way, identity is less a portrait than an assemblage: built from what breaks, what survives, and what refuses to disappear. We are not only made from what we choose, but from what chooses us. In African Mask – Assemblage, the face emerges from leftovers because that is how the self often emerges as well: not through a blueprint, but through what remains after experience. Chance plays a central role in that process. We don't choose many of the elements that shape us - we are exposed to them, we stumble into them, we absorb them. The assemblage becomes a way of showing that identity is both constructed and accidental. The mask is not a disguise, but a presence - a form built from what life provides, from what survives, and from what unexpectedly gathers into meaning.

Maintenance of Meaning

By: Shahar Tuchner

Every day begins with the same gestures.
Water. Soap. Pressure.
A circular motion against a surface that refuses to stay innocent.

The body learns repetition before it learns language.
Wipe. Rinse. Stack. Return.
A choreography performed for no audience.

Nothing dramatic happens.
No applause follows a polished floor.
No monument is built for a sink that shines.

And yet, within repetition, something accumulates.

Hours become sediment.
Movements become evidence.
Routine becomes a structure that slowly hardens around the body.

The mundane is not empty.
It is crowded.
It carries fatigue.
It carries humor.
It carries the quiet violence of being needed and unseen.

Sometimes, in the middle of maintenance, a shift occurs.

A bucket tilts differently.
A shadow cuts the tiles.
A stack of plastic containers begins to resemble a tower.

In that small accident, something changes.
The object is no longer just an object.
The action is no longer just cleaning.
The ordinary becomes unstable — almost ceremonial.

Sometimes the mundane becomes playful.
A bicycle is no longer only a bicycle.
A grill is no longer only a grill.
Objects exchange roles, as if function itself can be rewritten.

And sometimes fragments gather into a face.
A mask appears without intention,
assembled from leftovers,
as if identity can rise from what was never meant to survive.

Creativity does not always arrive as inspiration.
Sometimes it arrives as imbalance.

A misplaced tool.
A repeated movement that turns obsessive.
A structure that grows because no one stopped stacking.

If you repeat something long enough, it stops being invisible.

If you look at it long enough, it stops being ordinary.

The mundane is not the opposite of meaning.

It is where meaning ferments.
It is where it waits.
Quietly, patiently,
until something slips.

SOPHIA PLATTS-PALMER

@COVID19GHOSTSIGNS

How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

Since the COVID-19 pandemic I have become fascinated by the fading ghost signs and fossils of signage that are slowly embedding themselves into the architecture of our everyday lives. I often ask why nobody removes them? But I am glad that they don't. They are a moment in time and collective history, frozen. I have created a visual essay series on Instagram that captures these signs. They represent a memory but still remain a present that changed us profoundly but now seem to just exist in the in-between, at our feet, on peeling signs and empty santiser bottles.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

By chance the virus came, by chance we survived, by chance the signs remain, by chance we notice them.

The following is an open-ended audio transcription from Sophia:

Hi, Brandon. I'm sorry I haven't been in touch yet. I had a very busy couple of weeks. Excuse me if there's any noise. I have a toddler trying to fall asleep for me. I'm just going to talk a little bit about growth signs of COVID-19. Sorry, I'm not very good with academic language, so please interpret me as you wish, really. I re-looked over your questions and I just thought I'd just give a little bit of a spiel about them. Obviously, I've written about them previously, so please feel free to cherry-pick any quotes from my submission, blah, blah, blah. I guess I see them as memorials, but less like a plaque, for example. Although they are almost plaques, but less like that, more like an active memorial, a bit like a bullet mark or a bomb residue, like after the blitz when you had all the rubble and people carried on living in the rubble, flowers started growing through the rubble, things like that. I think that memorial-ness carries a lot more emotion. I see them as this, I guess COVID-19 was a time of hyperpresence, I think. That's what I find really interesting, is that there was really no forethought as to from policymakers or even the people consuming the signage, because there was really no forethought to what the pandemic, how it would pan out, how life would be afterwards.

We just lived in lockdown. We lived in the hyper present state of lockdown, of dealing with it. I suppose we have never really seen that in contemporary history. There was no There was no planning. Although it was history, it's become history. I suppose you always know it's going to become history. At the time when all of these signs were made and placed, it wasn't really thought of like that. I guess that's the same with ghost signs, right? But then there was a... Yeah, I suppose ghost signs were advertisements or always advertisements. This wasn't really... This was obviously like Sorry, I'm going to ramble a bit, so I'm going to get you to cherry-pick it all out. I think... How am I going with this?
Sorry, just bear with me

I said what I've said. I think that the presence of them is both when they were made and also what they are now. Like I say, they've become embedded into the architecture of everyday life despite never being intended to be permanent. Then I think that's where the element of chance is the most interesting or is most poignant. That's where chance comes in, is that they were never intended to be there as longevity, really. But then also they were intended to be there for longevity because like I said before, we didn't know or we weren't thinking at the time of ever coming out of a pandemic. I suppose you've got to think of the pandemic as a chance as well. It came about by chance, but it consumed the world, not just nationally, but globally and fed into every aspect of every part of every life and it affected the way we do things now. But then I also think there's, like I said before, there's a very Britishness to them. I know they were all over the world, but the way we placed them in the UK, there's a very Britishness to them. It's the fact that we followed the rules of these, let's be on a shitty signs.

It's like they're shitty, they're printouts, they're plaques. They're budget, they're made in hast, they're a very quick response. But the fact that they're queue formats and things like that, and I find that really interesting, that we would follow these crappy signs. Sorry, I was going back to advertisement as well. They're not like the traditional ghost sign as an advertisement, but then what I find really interesting is that they were actually used in many respects as a marketing tool four businesses and four companies. You'll see ones in takeaways that say Delivery drivers wait here or sponsored by Deliveroo, or there are ones in Pizza Hut that are like Pizza Hut branded or Greg's branded. They've all done a bit of It's almost become like an advertising format themselves or were used as such. I think that interplay of marketing and social policy is really interesting. I'm trying to think of anything else. Like I said, the fact that they've just become part of everyday life adds a mundaneness to what the pandemic was. They were something we'd never seen before. They weren't mundane at the time. They were rules to follow. Now they're just these tatty bits of paper or these faded signs on the floor that have become, like I said, part of the everyday mundane of life. We almost laugh at them now sitting there. I definitely do. I chuckle every time I see one still there, and I see shopkeepers going about their business with them, still there, not ever noticing them. It's not until I mention it to people that they start thinking, Oh, my God, yeah, I've really started noticing these everywhere now. My favourite one, for example, is seats that you still can't sit in. You see them in hospitals a lot. There'll still be a sign on a seat, and people will not sit on that seat. That is just, again, a very British thing, I guess there's all that to it. Let me just go refer to your questions and see what else I can say.
I've always been drawn to the in-between state in my work. I'm drawn to those in-between spaces, those heterotopias, so airports and hospital waiting rooms and corridors, the space of a phone call. The charity shop is the modern museum of contemporary culture. I guess that's why I was drawn to these so much as well. I'm fascinated by these spaces and objects and thoughts that are part of every day, but are also so overlooked and so liminal. I suppose there's a liminality to them. Now, there obviously wasn't at the time, and that's what makes them so fascinating, the shift in context. I think that's it, really. I haven't got that much more to say.

‘THINGS’
MEDIUM: WATERCOLOUR ON CARD (GIFT TAGS)

STELLA TRIPP

@STELLA.TRIPP

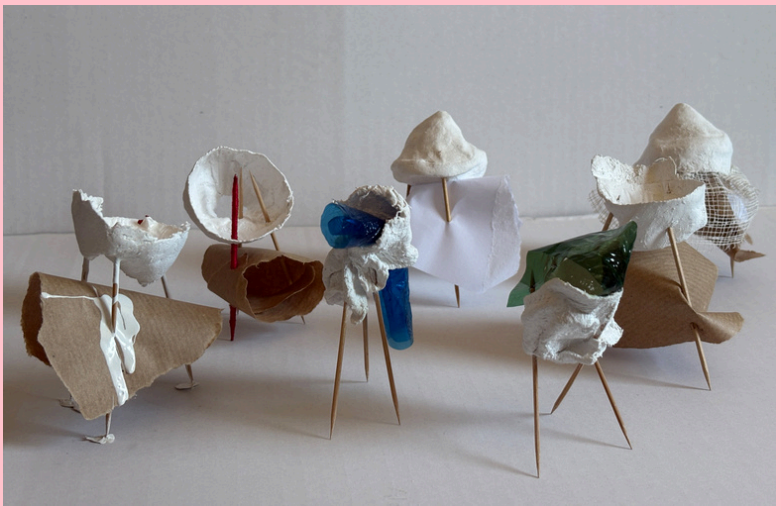
How does your work respond to the idea of 'the mundane'?

Often drawing inspiration from small, easily overlooked things, my fingers do the thinking, playing with materials and processes, creating curiosities and surprises. Making to explore possibilities, the fragility of the world and our engagement with it. Lavishing care on humble, often repurposed stuff is part of the inherent absurdity.

How does your work incorporate 'chance'? This can be during its creation, its engagement, interaction, or any other form.

My intricate, material-rich process involves improvisation, often deliberately choosing materials or a method not entirely within my control, navigating through chaos and a sea of "what ifs", selecting and refining, honing to resolution; not working towards a preconceived result but making in the hope of surprising myself.

'SYMPOSIUM'
MEDIUM: PLASTER BANDAGE, FOUND PLASTIC CHAIN, BAMBOO SKEWERS, WOODEN PEGS



'FRAGILE SHELLS'
MEDIUM: PLASTER BANDAGE, PAPER, COCKTAIL STICKS

You describe your fingers as "doing the thinking." Do you consider this a form of embodied chance - where the body leads before intention forms?

Absolutely. Intention lies in exploring materials. If I have too clear an idea of the end result, I'm less interested in making it. I leave space for the unknown, the potential for learning and surprise to be part of the making process; otherwise, it would be boring. Curiosity is a strong driver: what secrets and connections can my hands uncover? The thinking, explaining, verbal analysis is a very different process and comes later, if it comes at all, after coming out of the unknowing flow state necessary for making the work. There's enough stuff in the world. I make things not because of a need to produce a preconceived object or to paint a clearly imagined picture, but because of a need to explore, to ask myself questions. And the question is not how can I make this specific thing, but what can these materials make? What happens if I do this? Or combine things in this way? It's a physical process embodying questions and chance, often starting with 'what if'. My practice is quite varied, switching between materials and processes, as well as between modes of looking, seeing, interpreting – working from direct observation or completely nonrepresentational, maintaining a slightly uneasy unfamiliarity which encourages the element of surprise. I see all these things as being on a continuum: no barrier between abstract and representational, no barrier between art and life, just openness and curiosity.

In Things, tiny watercolours on gift tags elevate lost objects. Does working at a small scale intensify looking? How does scale affect the perception of the mundane?

It's impossible to see, or know, everything. When working from observation as well as the chance element of what catches the eye and holds attention, there's also choice about how close to focus in. Sometimes it's like fractals and seeing the complexity and connections between different levels of focus. In this case, I was working at a small scale and also looking at a small scale. While I was working on this series, I realised that I didn't want to make anything smaller in the paintings than it was in reality: I wanted to paint objects that were small enough to be painted life size or bigger on these cards, to make small paintings of small things. It's to do with paying attention, questioning what deserves our attention. And through close observation and paying attention, raising things above the mundane. Adding significance not through increasing size, but simply through drawing attention. Again, it's about surprise and discovery, looking closely to see things in a new light, their existence as well as their fragility and precariousness. How much exists that we don't notice? How noticing and paying attention changes our relationships and connections to all the little things that come together to make up our lives. A more mundane explanation is that I am short-sighted: focusing on details close up feels more 'honest' as it is the only sort of focusing my eyes can manage unaided. Cardboard gift tags are also mundane, transformed here from labels to paintings, objects in their own right. Perhaps by closely observing mundane things and painting them on mundane cardboard labels, something less mundane results. Perhaps, through the transformative alchemy of art, mundane plus mundane equals interest?

In Paper Bags Caught in the Act, found bags become temporary sculptural shapes. Is ephemerality essential to the meaning of these works, or could they be fixed permanently?

The playful process and light touch used to create these is an essential part of them. Fragility and precariousness are important themes in my work, and the ephemeral nature of these captures that in a way that I wouldn't want to change. I like to think that the bags are holding an active pose (as in yoga), embodying potential for movement.

'PAPER BAGS CAUGHT IN THE ACT'
MEDIUM: FOUND PAPER BAGS

You speak of navigating through chaos and "what ifs," selecting and refining. Where do you draw the line between playful improvisation and compositional resolution?

I look to the work to tell me what it needs. The questions continue until no more questions seem relevant to that particular piece. There may be questions left over which may be the start of another work. On a good day, there is no line – the playful improvisation continues until it leads to its own resolution. Through a lifetime of making, I have gained confidence in chance and learned to trust the process.

You note that some fragments get noticed and preserved, while many are lost. Do you feel your practice rescues objects from disappearance, or acknowledges the inevitability of loss?

That comment was in reference to a specific work (including the little Things paintings) I installed in a domestic vitrine. Looking at the finished work I can say maybe I painted these things because of the significant journey they've been on; marvelling at a tiny piece of stone found on a beach because of its beauty and history, or a broken brooch that belonged to my mother because it says something about the journey of her life as a refugee; but during the making I'm just totally engaged in the process: looking, mark making, colour matching, feeling my way. Other people looking bring their own stories and interpretations and that's fine. What's important is not my personal story but the connections that story enables me to make, the way it allows me to create things (which may include recognisable objects or might be accumulations of shapes and colours) that hold connections that others can relate to in their own way. In general I prefer "and /also" to "either/or" embracing multiple views and contradictions — ambiguities rather than absolutes — creating a multiverse rather than an either/or world. Persistent underlying themes include fragility, precariousness, connections, balance, absurdity, observing, paying attention, drawing attention, piecing together... I don't look for ways to interpret these themes, rather they are a part of me that materialises in the work through the making process. Why did I pick up that particular stone or acorn, why did that particular object survive the journey from one country to another? It's all random chance and yet at the same time it's a very precise sequence of events that led to this exact moment in time – if anything had been different I wouldn't be who I am, wouldn't be alive. So much chance forms us, and so much precision. So many chance moments which become fixed and inevitably lead to the present moment. Chances are if you weren't creating this magazine, the chain of chances that led to you asking me these questions wouldn't exist, and my random chance thoughts would not have coalesced into these precise words.

'**ONCE REMOVED**'
MEDIUM: WATERCOLOUR, CARD, PLASTER BANDAGE, PAPER STRING

FAB: CHANCE ENCOUNTERS

By: Brandon J. Barnard
Shortened from an article originally published 18 July 2026

In 2026, I curated Chance Encounters: Art Through Accident and Invitation for Fringe Arts Bath. I had participated in FaB before, but never as a curator. In 2024, Gacha'nce was selected for the Bath Open Art Prize Exhibition, and in 2025 I appeared across several FaB galleries and screenings. Curating felt like the next logical step - or at least logical by the standards of a practice built around chance.

My general motto is: apply first and figure it out later.

This does not mean pretending to know things you do not. It means accepting that you will rarely feel completely ready for the next stage of your practice. People often wait until they are "good enough" before applying for opportunities, but creative confidence tends to arrive after doing something, not before. There is no talent scout standing at the back of your local gallery, holding a phone in the air and announcing, "I think this is the next best thing we have been looking for." Most of the time, you get the position by putting yourself in it.

At the same time, curating a chance-based exhibition was not entirely random. I was already developing If/Then: Chance and Creativity, interviewing artists about the deliberate use of chance within their practices. My PhD also examines how chance can be structured to produce creative discoveries. I had spent a lot of time looking at a very small sliver of the world. So, if somebody was going to propose an exhibition about chance, why not me?

Who was involved?

The exhibition brought together work by Patrycja Loranc, Colin David Clarke, Brenda Miller, Charlotte Piper, Sandy Creighton, Mark Fearbunce, Chufan Luo, Clare Newton, Nigel Goldsmith, Kristina Hughes, Kelly Preedy, Jenia Demchenko, Cameron Lings, David Pereira, Zhaotian Wang, Scarlett Anderman, Nia Evans and Olga Ast. I also added three of my films to the screening reel: Tinguely Feeling, Gacha'nce and liCe.

The different works demonstrated that "chance" is not a single technique. Patrycja Loranc's VIII New Moon in Gemini emerged from a camera repeatedly jamming, causing the film to be rewound and exposed again. Brenda Miller's There and Back documented a chance meeting during a residency, gathering its material through a walk accompanied by the knitting of a traditional Gansey sample. Kelly Preedy began the paintings in The Blinded Series using instinct and a blindfold, before allowing herself five minutes of deliberate intervention.

Cameron Lings translated random number generation into dice sculptures. One of these arrived broken, which was stressful, but also created a new chance arrangement within an artwork already concerned with chance. Mark Fearbunce reorganised every word of The Taming of the Shrew into alphabetical order, while Tombola Tombola allowed visitors to draw winning tickets and receive miniature paintings of their numbers.

Olga Ast's Unformed Transformation invited visitors to alter a suspended net by adding materials to it. The work therefore changed according to the people, objects and attitudes passing through the space. Chufan Luo used coffee grounds with stainless-steel balls and the sound of a theremin. Nia Evans presented improvised dances outside Chinese takeaways. Zhaotian Wang's filmed performance responded to random instructions rather than fixed choreography.

These works were aesthetically and materially very different, but shared a willingness to give something else partial control. Chance did not remove the artist. It changed the conditions under which the artist had to act.

The FaB Coin

Running alongside the exhibition was another project: the FaB coin.

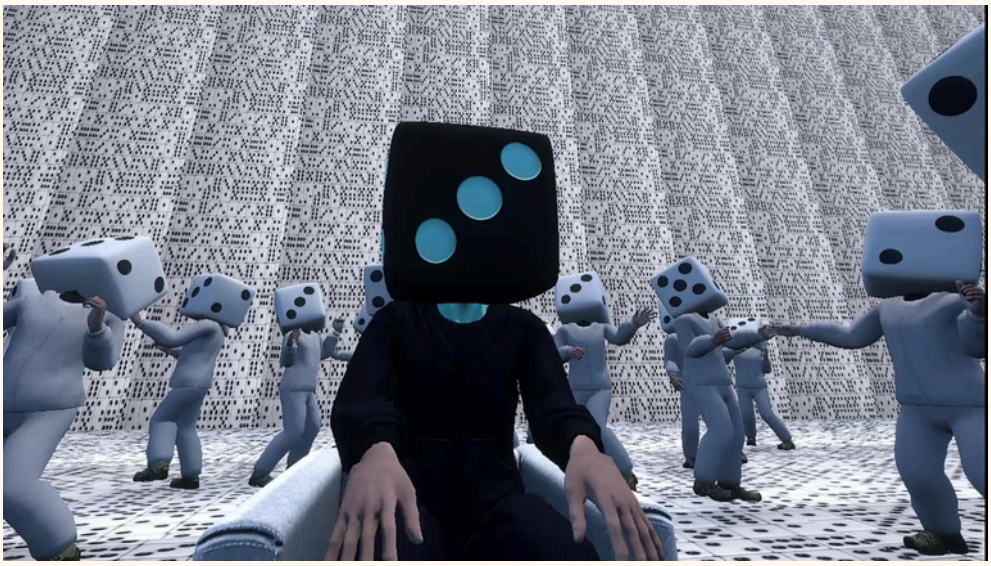
While researching chance, I read Daniel Spoerri's An Anecdoted Topography of Chance. The book begins with objects found on a table and uses them as openings into personal histories, memories and extended tangents. I love it because its structure is similar to my own Production History Articles: a seemingly minor object becomes a route into something much larger.

One entry concerned a bronze token connected to Jean Tinguely. My raw reading notes from 8 December 2025, recorded at 07:51, said: "Holy Shit - Tinguely Tokens. This may be a grail for me to try and find."

I am a major Tinguely fan. Researching his practice contributed to the creation of Tinguely Feeling, which remains one of my favourite films. I have also collected coins since I was a child, particularly exonumia: tokens, medals and coin-like objects that are not ordinary currency. I like them because they act as compact gateways into specific moments. A small object can carry the location, politics, imagery and ego of the people who produced it.
And yes, I bought a Tinguely token.

From that point, I wanted to create a commemorative coin for Chance Encounters. Technically, it is probably a medal rather than a coin because it is not currency and does not operate a machine. However, “coin” sounds much better, so I am sticking with it.
I had 200 produced by JM Band for £638.46, funded through my PhD budget. The moulds cost £130 per side, while each individual coin cost £1.84. An unexpected import fee of roughly £100 then appeared, because apparently choosing to spend a stupid amount of money giving objects away was not enough.

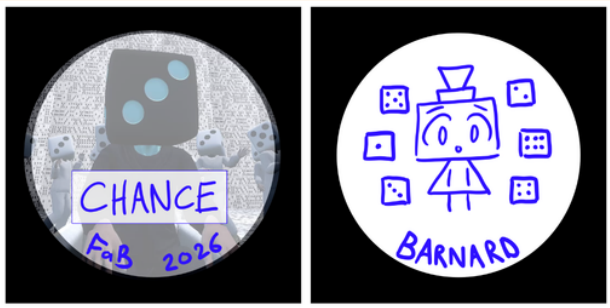
Each coin was made at 30 mm, matching the dimensions of the Tinguely token.
The obverse contains an image from my film Bones of Tyche: a dice-headed character sitting in a chair while other dice-headed figures dance around them. It also reads “FaB 2026” and “Chance”, fixing the exhibition to a particular event and year.



The image itself had already passed through several transformations. It began with me filming while wearing a dice-shaped cat bed on my head. The lights in the Roland Levinsky Building made its white pips appear blue. I then contacted an old acquaintance, SpongePierre, whom I originally met through streaming, to turn the character into a 3D model. I recorded scenes using that model inside Tower Unite. A still became part of the early FaB marketing, and then that image was stamped into metal.

Filming, online connections, a videogame, exhibition marketing and coin minting had all accumulated inside one tiny object. The next stage was deliberately outside my control: whatever happened to the coins after distribution.

The reverse features Cuatro, a recurring character across many of my projects, alongside my surname, Barnard. Coins have always been connected to ego, power and the desire not to disappear. Monarchs, presidents, national symbols and supposedly important events are pressed into metal and circulated as miniature monuments. I decided to follow tradition. When in Rome.



Most of the coins were scattered around Bath: on benches, in donation buckets, on the ground and occasionally somewhere slightly out of reach. I felt extremely conspicuous placing them, as if I was doing something illegal. It is technically littering, albeit quite expensive littering. Others went to artists, curators, friends, family members and my PhD supervisors. I have kept a small number to scatter around Japan. Gacha'nce was an important part of my creative journey, so allowing some of the coins to travel there feels like closing a circle - or at least looping it around again.

The intention is for ownership to be determined partially by chance. Somebody might find one without knowing what it is, search for it and discover the exhibition. It might remain in a drawer, be sold, catalogued, damaged, collected or thrown away. Some may never be found at all.

The coin has already been added to Numista as catalogue number 583000. I would love to return to the project in ten years and investigate where the coins have appeared, if anywhere. The absence of information would also be part of the result. Once the coins entered the world, their disappearance became as meaningful as their survival.

Building the Exhibition

On the 21st May 2026, I travelled from Plymouth to Bath for the installation. At the time, I was balancing my PhD Confirmation of Route amendments, the increasingly delayed If/Then publication, and a job interview that had originally been scheduled for the exhibition setup day.

So, I was a bundle of stress.

I was also less prepared than I wanted to be. On the train, I was still producing the labels containing each artist's name, artwork title and information. I could not enter my Airbnb until 15:00, while access to the exhibition space did not begin until 16:00. I therefore settled into a Pret at 10:10 and continued working.

I did not have access to the FaB email account, and several files were not with me. Around me, a woman lost her phone and the Pret staff attempted to remove a pigeon that had decided it also belonged there. By 13:20, I had finished enough of the preparation to begin distributing coins around Bath. I removed my dice fleece, put on sunglasses and tried to look inconspicuous.

It felt strange holding so many of the coins together. It was probably the final time that quantity would ever occupy the same place. The sound of them jingling was temporary too. Once scattered, they would never make that exact collective noise again. Then, at 14:49, I almost inhaled a bee.

When I finally entered the exhibition space, I was relieved to discover that artworks had actually arrived. A small but persistent fear had been that I would travel to Bath and find an empty room.

Sandy Creighton helped enormously with the installation, assembling frames and becoming the undisputed king of the drill. Other curators had brought friends to help, which I would definitely do in future. Curating quickly becomes less about having a grand artistic vision and more about holding something still, finding tape, moving a monitor and solving a succession of small problems before they accumulate into one very large problem.

The most difficult part was the technology. I stitched all the submitted films into one screening reel, only to realise that I had rendered the loop region rather than the complete timeline. Two films had been cut off, so I rendered it again.

The supplied media player did not have the correct remote. We eventually abandoned it and connected the drive directly to the projector, which then refused to play the file properly. The audio inside the MKV file was incompatible, requiring a third render without sound. I added a separate television with headphones so that visitors could still experience the audio, but this was later removed and the projector changed, introducing further aspect-ratio problems after I had returned to Plymouth.

Chance sounds wonderfully poetic until it is 11 PM and you are rendering the same video for the third time.

I used dice throughout the exhibition to distinguish Chance Encounters from the neighbouring galleries in the shared space. These were the same dice that appeared in Bones of Tyche, giving them another life and creating some shared lore between projects.
For Olga Ast's installation, I went into town to buy scissors, newspapers, paperclips and other materials. While there, I also bought three packets of Pokémon cards, because that was my current money-wasting activity. I added one of the energy cards to Olga's evolving installation as a small tribute.

These details may seem tangential, but they were part of the exhibition as I experienced it. The work was not produced inside a clean curatorial vacuum. It emerged through train journeys, missing files, shop visits, broken equipment, other people's labour, Pokémon cards, pigeons, exhaustion and time pressure.

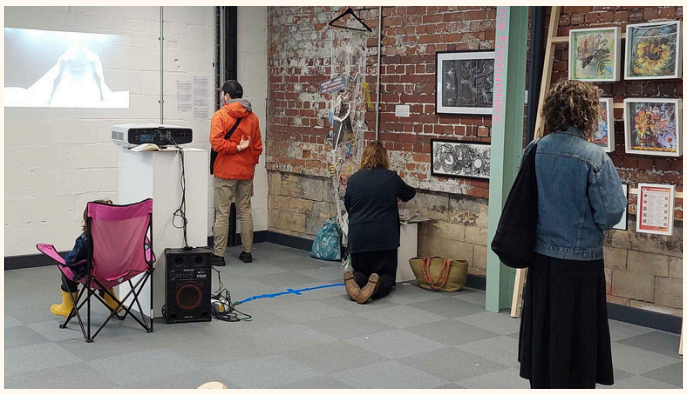
Opening and Teardown

When the exhibition opened, I was still printing labels. The printer was hell and a half, and I probably spent the first hour of the opening fighting it.
I was particularly nervous about Chufan Luo's performance. The original plan required equipment and a darkened room that we could not provide. Eventually, we agreed to stage it outside. Chufan had travelled internationally, and I wanted to ensure that the performance had a worthwhile audience.

Before it began, I ran between the FaB buildings telling people that a performance was about to take place. This turned out to be unnecessary. As soon as Chufan started playing the theremin, people stopped. The sound created its own audience. A crowd accumulated without being formally directed, which felt perfectly appropriate for an exhibition about chance encounters.

On the 6th of June, I returned for the final day and teardown, this time with my wife. The gallery remained busy, so we delayed dismantling it and allowed people to continue looking.
I had left a notebook in the exhibition, and visitors and artists had filled it with kind messages. More memorable, however, was a child sitting in the middle of the gallery watching the film reel repeatedly. They recognised that I appeared in some of the films and began asking questions.

Why did one of the robots only appear once? It broke.
Why did you make a film about a bug? Bugs are cool.
Do you still have all those colourful balls? No, I don't.



An older man also giggled at Tinguely Feeling. It remains strange to see people enjoy films I largely made for myself. You construct these peculiar objects in isolation, and then they briefly become part of somebody else's afternoon.

What Stayed With Me

The day I travelled to Bath for the installation was also the original date of a second interview for a job I really wanted. I asked for the interview to be moved because I had already committed to the exhibition and did not want to abandon the artists. In my mind, I had probably lost the job.

The interview was rearranged. I attended it after returning to Plymouth, and the day after the exhibition teardown, I was offered the role. Lucky.

By that stage, I was mostly relieved to have completed FaB. That sounds harsher than intended, but I had a new job, a PhD, several creative projects and a family life to maintain. Sometimes success does not feel like fireworks. Sometimes it is the relief of placing something down without it breaking - or without everything else crashing around it.

Curating Chance Encounters clarified that chance is not simply randomness added to an artwork. It is a shift in who or what is allowed to influence the outcome. The artists created situations in which cameras, materials, instructions, audiences, bodies and environments could act back upon them. Curating the exhibition extended this principle. I could establish a theme, select work and organise a space, but I could not fully determine what arrived, what broke, how the technology behaved, where visitors gathered or which encounters would stay with me.

This does not mean that chance automatically creates meaning. The exhibition required constant judgement, adaptation and care. Surrendering complete control is not the same as surrendering responsibility. If anything, uncertainty creates more decisions because you have to respond to circumstances as they emerge.

The event I remember is therefore not only the official exhibition. It is the coins jingling together before being separated. It is Sandy holding a drill, a pigeon inside Pret, a broken dice sculpture, the third video render, a Pokémon card attached to a net, strangers stopping when they heard a theremin, and a child asking why a robot disappeared. These were not interruptions to the exhibition. They were the exhibition as it was actually lived.

The spectacular parts were built from mundane actions: labelling, carrying, fixing, waiting, noticing, and helping. Chance did not arrive as a dramatic bolt from the sky. It accumulated through ordinary things that were allowed to affect what happened next.
Somewhere, a few hundred small metal objects are now continuing that process without me.

San & Cuatro : The Leaf

SHARED THEMES

Connections Across the Artist Responses by Brandon J. Barnard

Twenty-four artists answered the same two broad questions: how does their work respond to the mundane, and how does chance enter their practice?

Thankfully, they did not all give the same answer.

If every contributor had described chance as a happy accident and the mundane as “finding beauty in everyday life”, this section would be over quite quickly. Those ideas are present, but the responses collectively reveal something much more complicated (and interesting). Chance appears as weather, timing, material resistance, algorithms, bodily memory, social precarity, observation, repetition, error, and the actions of other people. The mundane is sometimes comforting, sometimes oppressive, sometimes funny, and sometimes so embedded within daily life that it becomes almost invisible.

The 24 artists present within this publication are not all saying the same thing. However, when their responses are placed alongside one another, connections start to emerge that are harder to notice when considering each artist alone. The following themes are what emerged.

Chance Is Not One Thing

The word “chance” starts to become a bit slippery when all of these responses are placed together. Cameron Lings makes chance visible by recording repeated dice rolls. Here, it is generated through a clear system: the individual result is unpredictable, but the process is controlled and repeatable. Richard Eveleigh and Aliaksandra Markava describe something quite different. They do not generate the weather or light conditions they work with. They place themselves in a position where they might notice what those conditions briefly reveal.

The relationship shifts again when the materials become less cooperative. Cylena Simonds begins with an arrangement of brambles, but the spray, removal process and even the wind can pull the image away from that starting point. Lorraine Cleary works with garments that have already been stretched, stained and shaped by somebody else’s life. Shahar Tuchner can stack and rearrange objects, but gravity remains part of the conversation. The artist still makes decisions, but does not make them alone.

Chance can also enter through other people. Alison Jagger and Himanshi Tyagi work in public spaces where gestures, crowds, and expressions continually change what can be photographed. Alice Blanco describes filmmaking as a game of chance because the camera must remain ready for something that may happen once and then disappear. In these cases, chance is part of the conditions under which the work becomes possible.

This is why I do not think chance can be understood as a particular material, technique or visual style. You cannot necessarily look at an artwork and immediately identify it as “chance-based”. Chance describes something about how the artist works: where control is interrupted, what else is allowed to influence the process, and how the artist responds when the situation moves away from what they could have planned independently.

In my PhD research, I use the term “agency restriction” to describe this. A person, material, system, environment or event limits or redirects the artist’s available choices, requiring some form of response. The artist does not disappear, and chance does not magically make the work for them. Control is instead passed back and forth between the artist and whatever they are working with.
The connection between these practices is that authorship becomes distributed.

Luck Is Look

A strong theme is that chance depends upon attention.

Kate Fallon-Cousins summarises this wonderfully through the phrase “luck is actually look”. She found a seven-leaf clover because she was looking for one. The clover may have existed independently, but its importance depended upon somebody noticing it.

Alexandra Savvo similarly describes chance entering through attention. Shapes on walls, stains on pavements, and accidental arrangements already exist before she arrives. Her role is not necessarily to produce them, but to recognise and frame them. Alison Jagger describes a quieter form of anticipation while walking with a camera: not waiting for a particular event, but remaining open to the possibility that light, mood, and subject might briefly align.

Andy Bratton’s collages make this relationship even more apparent. He may spend hours or days looking through fragments before a connection appears. From the outside, this might resemble waiting for luck. In practice, the waiting is active. He is testing, pairing, rejecting and allowing enough time for a relationship to become visible.

Richard Eveleigh repeatedly walks familiar routes, making his encounter with frost both accidental and anticipated. Shahar Tuchner describes the artist as something like a detective, developing sensitivity to the moment when a bucket tilts differently or an ordinary arrangement becomes strange. Stella Tripp asks what her hands and materials might uncover rather than beginning with a fixed answer.

Chance, in these practices, is not passive. The artist trains themselves to become interruptible.
The world does not necessarily change. What changes is the artist’s readiness to notice it.

The Mundane Is Structure, Not Background

Several artists reject the idea that the mundane is empty, neutral, or insignificant.

Crisia Constantine describes it as a “site of density”. Eating noodles, rinsing a fork, checking the clock and entering a shared kitchen are small actions, but they hold histories of migration, anxiety, class, survival and social visibility. Repetition eventually becomes architecture: something the person lives inside rather than something they simply do.

Himanshi Tyagi makes a similar move through photography. Vegetable sellers, street sweepers, and juice vendors can be treated as background features of a city, even though their repeated labour helps sustain its daily rhythm. Her photographs attempt to move these people from the back of the city to the front of the frame.

Alix Edwards connects the mundane to domestic labour, motherhood, and financial constraint. Supermarket trips, packed lunches, hospital appointments and the need to leave art college early are not separate from her practice. They shape its materials, urgency and political attention, particularly her focus on women whose experiences have been dismissed.

The mundane can also be infrastructural. Aurelie Crisetig examines satellite imagery and digital mapping: systems used so habitually that their distortions become invisible. James Frew locates a contemporary version of the mundane in doomscrolling, screen gestures, and continuous contact with transient information. Sophia Platts-Palmer records the fading COVID-19 signs that remain embedded within shops, hospitals, and pavements. What once carried urgent instructions has become part of the architecture, barely acknowledged by the people moving around it.

These works suggest that the mundane is not merely a collection of boring objects. It is the network of routines, technologies, labour, and social expectations that quietly organises everyday life.
We call it background because it functions without asking for our attention. That does not make it neutral.

Repetition Can Comfort, Reveal and Oppress

At first, repetition appears to be the opposite of chance. If something happens again and again, it begins to feel predictable. Cameron Lings's dice sculptures complicate this immediately. A single roll is an isolated result, but hundreds or thousands of rolls turn uncertainty into a visible pattern. Repetition does not remove chance; it allows us to see its behaviour over time.

The same principle appears within everyday routines. When Aliaksandra Markava returns to laundry, harvesting, firewood and familiar places, the repetition makes small changes easier to notice. The routine may remain broadly the same, but the light, weather, material and emotional conditions do not. Familiarity becomes a stable surface against which difference can appear.

However, stability is not always the same as comfort. In Crisia Constantine's writing, rinsing a fork twice or arriving at the kitchen before 11:00 creates a small sense of protection. The gestures do not actually control what will happen, but they make uncertainty feel temporarily manageable. Repetition becomes a structure the body builds around itself.

That structure can also become exhausting. The labour photographed by Himanshi Tyagi keeps ordinary life moving precisely because somebody returns to perform it each day. Shahar Tuchner's repeated acts of cleaning and maintenance sustain a space while gradually wearing down the often-unseen person responsible for them. What looks like a neutral routine can therefore contain endurance, inequality, anxiety and care.

Repetition is not simply doing the same thing again. It allows meaning to accumulate. Sometimes it creates calm; sometimes it turns chance into a pattern; and sometimes it reveals how much labour is required to keep life appearing stable. The repeated action becomes most visible when something changes, slips or finally becomes too heavy to ignore.

Ordinary Objects Become Accidental Archives

An archive sounds like something deliberate: documents gathered, labelled and protected because somebody has already decided that they matter. Many of the objects in these responses did not receive that treatment. They recorded people and events accidentally, using cracks, stains, handwriting, and wear instead of formal documentation.

A broken screen protector cannot tell us exactly when or why it was dropped, but the fractures in Barbara Jones's work prove that something happened to it. Lorraine Cleary's garments work in a similar way. Their stretched fabric, faded colours, and worn seams retain the movements of previous owners without revealing who those owners were. An empty pocket tells us that it once held hands or personal objects, even if the contents and person have disappeared. These are incomplete biographies, but they remain biographies of a sort.

Robert Verrill's shopping lists are more explicit, while still being unintentionally revealing. They were written to remember milk, bananas or toilet roll, not to document a life. However, handwriting, spelling, brands and combinations of items can turn a practical note into a strangely intimate portrait. The list becomes interesting precisely because its writer did not expect an audience.

Sometimes the record survives through somebody else's decision to care for it. Emily Price keeps drawings that her nieces considered disposable, preserving moments of childhood which were never created as important artworks. At other times, preservation happens through neglect. Sophia Platts-Palmer's fading COVID-19 signs have become accidental memorials because nobody removed them. Urgent instructions gradually turned into tatty parts of the architecture, recording a major historical event through their continued, slightly awkward presence.

An archive can even be formed through absence. Richard Eveleigh photographs webs after the spider has withdrawn, while Cylena Simonds removes brambles to reveal the marks, debris and empty spaces they leave behind. What is missing becomes part of the record. Alexandra Savvo's use of framing and naming then shows how an overlooked object can be moved from this uncertain state into something more formal and communicable.

These records are partial, unreliable and easy to lose. That is what makes them interesting. An official archive begins with a decision about what deserves to be kept. An accidental archive survives first and only later asks somebody to recognise what it contains.

Preservation Does Not Stop Loss

A photograph of frost does not preserve the frost itself. The frost still melts. What the photograph preserves is evidence that a particular person saw it, in a particular place, under conditions that will never occur in exactly the same way again.

This distinction appears in Aliaksandra Markava's description of painting as resistance to oblivion rather than resistance to impermanence. Art cannot prevent a moment from ending, but it can stop that moment from disappearing completely. It gives the experience a small afterlife.

The same limitation gives Alison Jagger and Richard Eveleigh's photography its urgency. Some are captured, while others are missed. The camera does not give the artist complete control over this process. It simply allows certain moments to be carried forward.

What is preserved is always a selection. Emily Price keeps some of her nieces' drawings, but cannot realistically save every scrap they produce. Sophia Platts-Palmer photographs COVID-19 signs partly because they are fading or being removed. Stella Tripp draws attention to fragile objects while accepting that their ability to disappear is part of what makes them meaningful.

Every preserved object therefore points towards other things that were lost. Saving one drawing reminds us of those that entered the bin. Recording one sign makes us aware of those already removed. Photographing one fleeting scene reminds us that countless others passed without being captured. Art does not defeat loss. It creates a temporary place for something that might otherwise vanish without being noticed.

This may be why mundane objects can become so emotionally charged. A monument is built with the expectation that it will survive. A grocery bag, damaged item of clothing, or handwritten note is not. Choosing to preserve such an object is a way of saying that, despite its ordinary and temporary nature, something happened here that was worth remembering.

Authorship Is a Negotiation

Who made Richard Eveleigh's image of a frozen cobweb?

Richard chose the position, framing and moment to take the photograph. However, the image also depended upon a spider building the web, the temperature falling and frost making the structure visible. Remove any one of those participants and the photograph does not exist.

This question runs through many of the responses. The artist begins a process, but something outside their full control is allowed to affect its direction. Aliaksandra Markava can decide to observe a familiar landscape, but cannot arrange the weather that transforms it. Aurelie Crisetig can select and combine satellite images, but the machine generates errors and overlaps she could not reproduce independently.

Materials can push back as well. Lorraine Cleary's fabric arrives with wear, previous histories and physical resistance already built into it. A difficult piece may curl, fray or refuse the needle, forcing her to reconsider the direction of the work. Sean BW Parker describes paint as having its own voice, while Shahar Tuchner works with the point at which gravity allows a structure to balance without becoming completely stable. In each case, the material is not a silent substance waiting to obey instructions. Its behaviour becomes part of the decision-making process.

Cameron Lings makes this division of control especially clear through dice. He chooses the system, the number of rolls and the way the results will be recorded. What he cannot choose is the result of each roll. The artwork comes from both sides of that arrangement: the deliberately constructed conditions and the outcomes those conditions produce.

Shared authorship becomes more complicated when other people are involved. Alison Jagger and Himanshi Tyagi photograph public environments, but the people within those environments are not simply materials. Their movements and reactions affect the image, while the photographer's presence can also affect them. Authorship therefore brings responsibility as well as unpredictability. The artist must decide not only what can be captured, but what should be.

None of this means that the artist disappears. Somebody still initiates the process, recognises what happened, selects what to retain and decides when the work is complete. The artist remains responsible, but is no longer imagined as the only meaningful force involved.

Authorship becomes a negotiation between intention and whatever refuses to be fully controlled.

Letting Go Is Still a Decision

Chance-based practice is sometimes described as though the artist simply gives up control and watches what happens. The responses show something more deliberate. Control is not abandoned all at once; it is loosened at particular stages and reintroduced at others.

Alison Jagger, for example, does not stage the scene in front of her camera. She allows the moment to occur without directing it, but still chooses where to stand, what to include and when to press the shutter. The event is uncontrolled; its framing is not. That distinction is important.

Collage makes this movement especially visible. James Frew begins by placing unrelated material together without knowing what it will become. Andy Bratton waits until an unexpected connection appears, while Kate Fallon-Cousins keeps rearranging fragments before finally gluing them into place. Chance creates possibilities, but it does not decide which possibility deserves to survive.

Fia Cavozzi similarly begins without a fixed structure, allowing footage and sound to collide during the edit. However, the resulting sense of overload is not completely accidental. Speed, repetition, layering and sequence are adjusted until the chaos produces a particular experience for the viewer. What begins as uncertainty gradually becomes composition.

The same movement occurs when artists follow their materials. Lorraine Cleary allows fabric to redirect her, but continues making choices about colour, construction and placement. Stella Tripp follows a trail of "what ifs" until the work no longer seems to require another question. The material may suggest where to go, but the artist still decides when they have arrived.

Control and surrender are therefore not competing philosophies. They are different stages within the same process. Surrender allows something unplanned to enter; control allows the artist to recognise, test and develop what appeared.

Too much control and the process can only confirm what was already known. Too little, and the artist may be left with possibilities that never become anything more than noise.

Imperfection Leaves Evidence

A deliberately drawn crack and a crack caused by dropping something might look similar, but they do not mean the same thing.

This distinction is important to Barbara Jones. The fractures in her screen protectors have value because they were produced through real incidents rather than carefully copied to resemble damage. Each line is evidence of an encounter between the object and the world, even if we cannot reconstruct exactly what happened.

Imperfection can expose systems as well as physical events. Aurelie Crisetig's glitches show the point at which satellite images, datasets and algorithms fail to align cleanly. The distortion is an aesthetic opportunity, but it is also evidence that the apparently neutral technology used to represent the world is partial and unreliable.

Within material practices, irregularities record the struggle involved in making. Cylena Simonds keeps the scratches, exposed paper and debris left by removing brambles. Lorraine Cleary allows fraying fabric and uneven tension to remain visible when they redirect her stitching. These marks show where the material resisted the artist rather than behaving like a passive substance.

Emily Price gives this resistance a more personal dimension. Leaving glue stains and poorly aligned edges in her collages means resisting the urge to correct everything. Her description of this as a "healing agony" shows that imperfection can record a psychological negotiation as well as a physical one. The unfinished-looking edge becomes evidence that control was available but deliberately not exercised.

This does not mean that every mistake is automatically interesting. A stain is not meaningful purely because it is accidental. Its value comes from what it reveals, changes or allows the artist to recognise. Shahar Tuchner's unstable arrangements become significant when a small imbalance changes how the whole structure is understood.

A perfectly cleaned surface can conceal the process that produced it. Correction removes the awkward joins, failed alignments and moments when the artist had to adapt. By retaining selected imperfections, the work keeps part of its own decision trail visible.
The crack, glitch or stain is therefore not merely a flaw. It tells us where intention met something that refused to cooperate.

Meaning Often Arrives Afterwards

Several contributors do not begin with a fully formed concept. They make, notice and interpret in a loop.

Sean BW Parker describes his process as “make, then see what I’ve made”. Meaning may begin as a small germ, become obscured during production and reappear only after he has lived with the work for a while.

James Frew allows narratives to emerge when unrelated images and text begin forming relationships. Fia Cavozzi does not require a clear path before editing; meaning can develop across repeated experiments using both old and new footage. Andy Bratton discovers relationships through prolonged looking. Stella Tripp separates the embodied act of making from the verbal analysis that may happen later.

Alix Edwards may collect an object without knowing why, keep it for years and only later understand its place within an artwork. The delay is not wasted time. The object remains available until another experience or idea activates it.

This supports the idea that reflection is not simply an explanation attached after the “real” creative work has finished. Reflection is one of the stages through which the discovery becomes visible.

Chance may produce an event immediately, but its meaning can have a long afterlife.

Attention Creates Value

A sweet wrapper does not physically change when it moves from the floor to a gallery. What changes is the attention surrounding it.

Barbara Jones makes this shift visible by presenting wrappers and damaged screen protectors as objects worth examining. Their ordinary purpose falls away and details that previously seemed irrelevant - the wrinkles, fractures and evidence of handling - become the reason to look. Kate Fallon-Cousins and Stella Tripp perform similar transformations with commercial ephemera and tiny discarded objects. The materials were always there, but the artistic frame changes their status.

Neil Adams makes the question of value particularly difficult to avoid. A discarded plywood offcut becomes the surface of a priced artwork, while an ordinary strawberry is reimagined as a ruby. The transformation is partly material, but also conceptual. We are asked why a gemstone is considered valuable, why scrap is not, and what happens when artistic labour rearranges that hierarchy.

This process is not limited to objects. Robert Verrill's shopping lists move from being rubbish on the ground to intimate portraits in a gallery. Alix Edwards draws attention to domestic materials and the experiences of women who have been socially disregarded. Himanshi Tyagi photographs workers who are essential to everyday life but frequently treated as part of the city's background. In each case, attention changes what - or who - is permitted to occupy the foreground.

This connects to my idea of sanctifying the mundane. Framing, naming, preserving and displaying do not simply reveal value that everybody had somehow missed. They actively produce and redistribute it. The artwork instructs the audience: stop looking through this and begin looking at it.

However, this also gives the artist a significant amount of power. Alexandra Savvo describes framing as a decision about what enters the field of visibility. To draw attention to one object, person or story is also to leave countless others outside the frame.

Attention can challenge an existing hierarchy, but it can also create a new one. Sanctifying the mundane is therefore not an innocent act of discovering hidden beauty. It is a choice about what deserves to be seen, remembered and cared for - and that choice carries responsibility.

Chance Is Not Automatically Positive

Chance is often discussed romantically, as if it exists purely to deliver exciting discoveries to artists. Several contributors complicate that idea.

In Crisia Constantine's writing, uncertainty operates through migration status, class, bodily vigilance and the fear of being observed. Chance has consequences that repeated rituals can only make temporarily bearable.

Himanshi Tyagi recognises that an unplanned moment of vulnerability might create a powerful photograph while still being wrong to capture. Her response is clear: the dignity of the person matters more than the image.

Alix Edwards's work is connected to domestic abuse, poverty, childcare and histories of women being dismissed. Sophia Platts-Palmer's signs remain because a global crisis arrived and reorganised ordinary life. Aurelie Crisetig connects technological disruption to environmental instability. James Frew's apparently chaotic online materials still come from systems that are algorithmically structured rather than neutral.

Even positive chance depends upon conditions. Who has room to experiment? Who can afford failure? Who experiences uncertainty as play, and who experiences it as danger?

This does not invalidate chance as a creative method. It means chance requires ethical as well as creative calibration. Restricting control can produce discovery, but it can also expose vulnerability. The artist remains responsible for how they design, interpret and present that encounter.

So, What Actually Connects These Practices?

After reading through all of the responses, I do not think the main connection is simply that these artists find beauty in ordinary things. That is present, but it does not explain enough.

The mundane provides a baseline. It is the route walked often enough to stop being examined, the repeated task performed without discussion, or the object used so regularly that it becomes part of the background. Chance becomes noticeable when something disturbs that familiarity. A change in weather reveals a previously invisible web. A material tears or resists. A system produces an error. An object appears somewhere it was not expected.

However, the interruption does not automatically become meaningful. Most accidents happen and disappear without producing anything. The creative work begins when somebody recognises that a change may be useful, responds to it and stays with it long enough to see what else it might contain.

This is where experience and decision-making return. The artist selects, frames, rearranges, tests and reflects upon what happened. Chance may produce the initial material or redirect the process, but it does not guarantee a discovery. Meaning develops through the artist's attempt to understand and work with the interruption.

This is close to what I mean by structured serendipity. The outcome cannot be fully designed in advance, but the artist can create - or deliberately enter - conditions in which something unexpected is more likely to be noticed and developed. Sometimes this involves a formal system, such as repeated dice rolls. Elsewhere, it means remaining receptive to weather, material behaviour, public activity, or found objects.

The shared movement is therefore not a particular style or definition of chance. Something familiar is disrupted, the artist negotiates a response, and the significance of that response often becomes clearer through later selection and reflection.

The mundane supplies the context that makes a change visible. Chance introduces the change. Practice determines whether anything meaningful is made from it.

IF/THEN

Chance and Creativity

VOLUME ONE

THE MUNDANE ISSUE

August 2026

Edited by Brandon J. Barnard

Cover image: Screen-grab from 'Pills' (2025) by Brandon J. Barnard.

All artworks, artist statements and social handles remain the property of their respective contributors.

IF/THEN is published independently of the PhD research. Any separate academic analysis of contributor responses will be undertaken only with appropriate ethics approval and specific contributor consent.

IF/THEN

Chance and Creativity

What if the ordinary is already important?

VOLUME ONE · THE MUNDANE ISSUE · AUGUST 2026

Edited by Brandon J. Barnard